

# **Internal Migration in Scotland and the UK:**

## **Trends and Policy Lessons**

**Expert Advisory Group on Migration and Population**

## Executive Summary

This report analyses internal migration within Scotland, and between Scotland and the rest of the UK (rUK). While there has been considerable focus on international migration to Scotland in the UK, far less attention has been paid to internal migratory flows. This is partly because there are no legal restrictions to such mobility, meaning that internal movement tends not to be the object of immigration policy measures. Nonetheless, internal migration has significant impacts on both sending and receiving areas, affecting population structure, labour markets and economic growth, as well as the attractiveness and viability of local communities. It is therefore important to understand the geographic distribution, dynamics and impacts of internal migration.

This report draws on a range of administrative, survey and census data that can help us understand patterns of internal migration. The most recent data available at the time of writing is used throughout. Such analysis can also help inform the range of measures that can be taken at local and national level to incentivise or support internal movement and settlement. With this in mind, the report is structured in two main parts. After defining and explaining internal migration (Chapter 1), we draw on available data to examine the main patterns of migration within Scotland (Chapter 2) and between Scotland and rUK (Chapter 3). Based on a survey of Scottish local authorities, in part two we map the range of measures local government has taken to attempt to steer internal migration and settlement and explore implications for potential future strategies (Chapter 4).

## Defining and Explaining Internal Migration

Internal migration occurs where a person or household moves to a new location within the same country, whether for a short-term basis (3-12 months) or for the long-term (more than 12 months). In order to distinguish internal migration from a residential move, we assume that such movement also involves a change in social circumstances, typically (though not always) implying a change of employment for those who are economically active.

Migration theories have tended to explain decisions to migrate in terms of the balance of opportunities and risks associated with movement. Migration may be an individual or a household decision, usually taken with the aim of improving life chances in terms of employment and income, as well as other social and cultural aspects of well-being (ranging from educational opportunities, housing and public amenities, to the cultural vibrancy of places of destination). The balance of opportunities and risks tend to change over the life course: for example, younger, single people are most likely to move because of lower constraints and higher rewards over their lifetime; families may face greater constraints to moving, but can be motivated by a desire to enhance educational and career opportunities for their children; while older migrants may be seeking suitable retirement destinations.

The risks of migration leading to adverse outcomes may be partly offset by migration networks (family and friends who are already resident in the area of destination), who can share information and facilitate integration. The risks of migration are generally assumed to increase as the distance rises, because of the higher costs of

moving and cultural adjustment. Thus internal migration may be expected to be more prevalent than international movement. However, internal migrants still face barriers linked to finding employment, affordable housing, schooling, and adjusting to different socio-cultural conditions. Understanding these constraints can help inform local and national policy interventions to encourage mobility.

### **Migration within Scotland**

Most data on internal migration is drawn from records that count people crossing an administrative boundary within a country (a local authority or health board), but such movement does not always indicate a significant change of circumstances. Thus only 70% of the moves between Scotland's 32 local authorities also involve a move between its 11 health boards. The implication is that not all of these moves constitute migration (in line with our definition of migration above). Indeed, many moves across local authorities may be linked to opportunities and constraints in the housing market, with a small move compatible with commuting to the same job.

Drawing on census data, we also find that 50% of people who moved in 2010-11 moved less than 5 miles, and 70% less than 10 miles. Scottish Household Survey data from 2016-17 similarly finds that most (67%) people living in Scotland have never moved, or only moved a distance of less than 5 miles. This distinction between short and long-distance moves needs to be born in mind when analysing data on internal migration within Scotland.

However, a comparison of local authority and health board movement between 2001-2017 suggests a stable pattern of movement across the two measures. Thus while figures based on local authority registrations may overstate the level of intra-Scottish migration, they show a similar trend over time to that revealed by health board movements. Notable within these data is the high level of outflows from Lothian, Greater Glasgow and the Clyde. However, Lothian and Greater Glasgow also draw in migrants from almost all other health boards in Scotland, partly because of the high level of student mobility into Edinburgh and Glasgow. Among all of these flows, young people dominate.

Looking at flows by type of area (the six-fold urban/rural split used by Scottish Government), we find that in-migration and out-migration rates (per head of population) tend to be highest in rural and remote areas, and relatively low for urban areas. The lowest rates are found in 'other urban areas', which mainly comprise towns in the central belt. However, overall levels of inflows into urban areas are far higher than for rural areas, with an average of 11,500 more people moving annually into large urban areas between 2010-11 and 2017-18, compared to 4,800 moving to accessible rural locations.

### **Migration between Scotland and rUK**

Scotland has enjoyed positive net migration from outside of Scotland of around 20,000 p.a. over the past two decades, although this figure has fluctuated annually. Around two-fifths of these flows represent migration between Scotland and rUK. Most people who arrive in Scotland are aged 18 to 29. Migration from rUK has two

peaks: ages 18-20 (related to student migration), and those in their late 20s and early 30s.

Out-migration from Scotland to rUK is concentrated in the same age groups as in-migration, though the peak in ages 18-20 is strikingly lower, suggesting that a lower proportion of young people leave Scotland to study in England. Out-migration rates, especially for those in their late 20s and early 30s, have significantly declined over the past decades, indicating an increased likelihood of students from the rUK staying in Scotland after studies.

Most migrants from rUK move to the two largest cities, Edinburgh and Glasgow. The largest group of out-migrants also comes from the two largest cities, although out-migration has declined over time. While most big cities (except Edinburgh) experienced negative net migration with the rUK in the beginning of this century, the patterns have changed: all cities (except Aberdeen and surrounding areas) now receive more migrants from the rUK than lose. This supports the idea that many young people from rUK stay and work in Scotland post-study. On average, migrants (or people who moved a year prior to the census date) have higher educational levels than non-migrants. The percentage of individuals with degrees is 10-20% higher among migrants than non-migrants.

Many migrants, especially those who move within the UK, are return migrants, i.e. moving back to their country of birth. Return migrants account for 40% of migrants from Scotland to England and 25% from rUK to Scotland. People born abroad form a significant portion, one-fifth, of migrants between Scotland and the rUK; and they move in both directions. The analysis thus does not support the popular notion that international migrants mostly move from Scotland to England.

### **Local Authority Strategies and Policies**

Many Scottish local authorities have deep concerns about population issues in their areas. Whilst for a few (notably Edinburgh and the Lothians) concerns are focused on growing population and the potential strain on services and housing, for most the main issue is one of labour shortages and depopulation. For most west coast areas and predominantly rural areas, the major concern is one of labour shortages, and the loss of younger, and especially more highly educated residents, who are attracted to larger towns and cities for study, better paid employment and social/cultural opportunities. Ageing of the local population places pressure on health and social care provision. The loss of younger and more highly educated workers is linked to shortages of skilled labour in key sectors ranging from tourism and agriculture, to care and health.

Some local authorities have sought to implement local level initiatives and campaigns to attract and retain people. Given the lack of policy levers at local level, most initiatives and strategies are focused on encouraging in-migration from other areas of Scotland and rUK, rather than targeting international migration. Some local authorities have introduced measures to incentivise relocation to their area, but most recognise that in-migration can only be one factor alongside others in tackling their population issues. Economic regeneration, investment in employment opportunities

to attract and retain the resident working age population are highlighted as equally if not more important.

Given that most in-flows to these areas come from other (neighbouring) areas of Scotland, there is a risk that local authority strategies may create or exacerbate competition between regions for population with no net gain to the overall population.

## Conclusions

Most residential moves in Scotland occur over short distances, and are influenced by the housing market, as well as transport infrastructure and thus opportunities for commuting. It is important that the Scottish Government gain a clear understanding of these interactions, so that it can plan housing and infrastructural investments with a view to promoting mobility, while discouraging patterns of commuting that may run counter to environmental goals.

In terms of intra-UK migration, Scotland has recently experienced positive net migration from rUK, reversing a period of net outflows during the previous 50 years. However, there is limited research explaining the factors that attract rUK migrants to Scotland, suggesting the need for further enquiry including a survey of migrants.

Migration is heavily concentrated among the young, and to some extent among the better educated. In combination, this results in a very significant movement of young people to Scotland's major cities, which offer a wide range of higher education opportunities. For these destinations, the influx of young people enhances economic dynamism, and also creates a relatively low demand for public services (other than education). In contrast, those "left behind" areas have a much older population, higher demand for public services, and a lack of well-qualified young people, constraining their growth, or even leading to their decline.

This raises a fundamental question about the allocation of public resources between, on the one hand, Scotland's large cities which appear to be the likely engines of future economic growth; and, on the other, the wide hinterland where demographic forces and the present configuration of higher education institutions is leading to an ageing population increasingly dependent on public service support. Equity considerations suggest that public service support should be equally accessible, regardless of location. Yet this may become a more difficult aspiration to realise with the continuing ageing of the population in smaller non-urban areas.

Local authorities face challenges in implementing policies to attract migrants either from within the UK or overseas. This is partly because they lack the policy levers that might improve migrants' outcomes. Improved co-ordination and collaboration both between local authorities, as well as with national governments, is needed in order for local policy initiatives to be more effective and to avoid unhelpful competition between local authorities for the same residents. A careful review is needed of the range of policy levers that can influence migration and settlement decisions, in a way that promotes the wellbeing of both host communities, and migrants themselves.

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# 1

## Introduction

## 1. Introduction

Migration has been instrumental in forming the Scottish nation as it is today. All of those living in Scotland are either direct migrants or the children of migrants who came here sometime after the Ice Age. Migration will continue to mould Scottish society in the future. Last century was dominated by net emigration – more people leaving Scotland than arriving, and much of this migration comprised moves to and from other parts of the UK. But so far this century, more people have moved to Scotland than have left. Since the beginning of the century, about 80 - 100,000 individuals have arrived in Scotland annually, whereas 60 - 80,000 people have left. The country has experienced an average net migration of 20,000 individuals annually over the last two decades. Migration between Scotland and the rest of the UK accounts for two-fifths of the country's positive net migration. Within Scotland, there were significant movements of population from the north and east to the west during the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, mostly driven by the Industrial Revolution. In the latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and in recent years, movement has instead been from west to east, with economic change again being an important driver.

In a previous report (EAG 2019a), we discussed international migration – movements between Scotland and the EU or between Scotland and other parts of the world. This report considers shorter distance moves – between Scotland and the rest of the UK (rUK) or moves within Scotland. There are no legal barriers to such flows, such as visa or work permit requirements. For migration within the UK and within Scotland, the barriers to movement are not so much legal, but comprise a mixture of psychological, social and economic factors. If liberal democracies wish to influence internal flows, they can only do so by offering incentives, such as higher salaries or access to subsidised housing. We discuss the efficacy of such policies later in the report.

Internal migration has an important role in shaping an area's population structure. As migrants tend to be relatively young, migration flows typically increase the average age at the origin and reduce it at the destination region. Thus we find that Scotland's four major cities, Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh and Glasgow, which are favourite destinations for migrants, have younger populations than any of Scotland's other local authorities. In contrast, the average age of those living in Dumfries and Galloway, Argyll and Bute and Na h-Eileanan Siar, areas from which young people often migrate, is more than six years greater than residents of Edinburgh. Migration also affects the overall population level. Since 1981, the populations of Aberdeenshire, East and West Lothian, Perth & Kinross and Highland have all increased by more than 20 per cent, while that of Inverclyde has fallen by more than 20 percent. These changes are driven principally by net migration rather than by the "natural change" – the difference between births and deaths.

Internal migration also has important impacts on productivity, economic growth, and public services. As most migration is either for study or work, internal flows tend to increase the productive capacity at the destination, while reducing it at the origin. Migration also increases demand for public services at the destination, while reducing it at the origin. Such changes can have profound effects on communities: rural communities may find it impossible to sustain public services once population drops below a critical level. But the reverse can happen in cases where rapid immigration creates pressure on services such as school education and health.

If the UK government succeeds in reducing international migration flows to the UK, Scotland's population will become more reliant on internal migration for any growth. The "natural change" – births less deaths – in Scotland's population has been virtually zero over the past two decades (it averaged only 490 persons over the period 2004-2018). Since 2015, it has become negative. The Registrar General's population projection suggests that deaths will exceed births by an average of 10,000 between 2020 and 2030. Thus Scotland's population can only grow if there is significant net in-migration. Further, without migration inflows from the rUK, Scotland's population is projected to age even faster and eventually decline (EAG 2019a).

## 1.1 Defining and Explaining Internal Migration

Migration is usually understood to involve a change of location and of social circumstances, whether on a short-term basis (3-12 months) or for the long-term (more than twelve months).<sup>1</sup> For workers, migration often entails a change of employment, though this is not always the case: intra-firm transfers can also involve change of location. International migrants require permission from the government at their chosen destination to be allowed to migrate. But for internal migration, no such permission is required and the effects of a change of residence on social and economic circumstances are less clear. This is because internal migration is invariably measured by counting the number of people who are deemed to have crossed some administrative boundary within a country.

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<sup>1</sup> The UN defines 'internal migration' as 'The movement of people within a State involving the establishment of a new temporary or permanent residence... Internal migration movements can be temporary or permanent and include those who have been displaced from their habitual place of residence such as internally displaced persons, as well as persons who decide to move to a new place, such as in the case of rural-urban migration. The term also covers both nationals and non-nationals moving within a State, provided that they move away from their place of habitual residence. (IOM, [https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/iml\\_34\\_glossary.pdf](https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/iml_34_glossary.pdf)).

Crossing administrative boundaries does not always indicate a significant change of circumstances. Many short distance moves are associated with changes in housing conditions, while longer distance moves are more likely to involve both a change in housing and of some other circumstance such as employment or education. We explore these questions in Chapter 2 when we consider how migration flows are classified and measured in Scotland.

There is a range of theories in social science seeking to explain migration. Within economics, the best known is human capital theory (or neoclassical economics) and is particularly associated with Becker (1962) and Sjastaad (1962). It is based on an individualistic decision-making approach in which potential migrants decide to locate at the destination that offers the best alternative to their current location. Individuals are rational agents and their decisions on the “best alternative” take account of current and future, market and non-market, costs and benefits. Since prospects are not certain, these costs and benefits are also be adjusted by the willingness of the individuals to take risks. More risk-averse individuals are less likely to migrate.

The human capital model is based on certain assumptions about individualistic, rational behaviour, that many have argued fail to capture the complexity of social behaviour. Thus many social scientists have adjusted such theories to capture insights from other disciplines (Boswell 2008). For example, the ‘new economics of migration’ tends to view decision-making from the perspective of households, which make collective decisions in order to spread risk across members. This approach emphasises how migration decisions are embedded in a range of decisions across an individual’s lifecourse, including educational and occupational choice, partnership and childbearing, and retirement (Kulu and Milewski 2007). Both approaches help explain why migrants tend to be young, as they have longer to realise the benefits of migration and may move to enhance their qualifications and/or future earnings.

Other theorists have incorporated the role of migrant networks, which serve to offset the costs of migration through providing information and resources to reduce risk and assist in integration in places of destination (Haug 2008). Theories of ‘cultures of migration’ (Kandel and Massey 2002) show how particular places of origin may normalise migration as an expected and desirable way of enhancing life chances, just as neighbouring areas with similar socio-economic conditions sustain a more sedentary culture that discourages emigration. Systems theories, meanwhile, explore structural relations between places of origin and destination (such as shared language, culture, trade, or historical ties) to explain why people from certain places of origin often migrate to the same destinations (for an overview, see Bakewell 2014).

Importantly, all of these approaches show that migration is not the norm: given the risks associated with mobility, most people prefer to remain in their place of origin. Such risks are expected to increase where the move involves a greater distance, implying higher costs and logistical challenges in moving, as well as separation from family and friendship networks. Other risks may be linked to differences in socio-cultural conditions (for example, a different language, schooling system, or housing market). Families may face particular challenges, for example in finding employment for both partners, and the disruption for children caused by changing school and social networks. Some of these challenges can be offset through migrant networks, which can help smooth transitions. Public authorities in areas of destination can also play an important role, providing assurances that a decision to migrate will not result in significant disruption or unexpected negative outcomes.

For potential migrants, another consideration is whether the move is expected to be temporary or permanent. Households or individuals may seek to reduce upheaval or uncertainty through a temporary move (potentially transitioning to a longer-term one); or by repeated short-term moves, also known as pendular or seasonal migration. Such patterns of temporary migration were common in Scotland prior to the Second World War (Anderson 2018), often associated with agriculture, fishing, tourism and construction. More recently, seasonal variations in demand in these sectors has been met by international migration, particularly from Eastern Europe. But the underlying motive remains one of moving to take advantage of higher incomes that are available at the destination compared with the origin, while retaining a permanent (family) base in the place of origin.

Migration clearly has a number of significant impacts on both places of origin and destination. Given that migrants tend to be younger than the average population and that mobility tends to be driven by a desire to improve life chances, they typically make a positive contribution to productivity and economic growth in places of destination – indeed, migration is frequently associated with problems of ‘brain drain’ from places of origin. However, substantial in-migration may also place pressures on public services in places of destination – while potentially leading to under-use and even closure of services in places of origin. In terms of housing markets, regions of origin will tend to see house prices and rentals fall, while the opposite is true in destination regions. And if the supply of housing at the destination region fails to adjust, perhaps due to planning regulations or some other restriction on supply, the increasing cost of housing may deter migrants who feel that the benefits of movement are outweighed by the additional costs of accommodation. If such costs deter workers from moving to the jobs where their productivity is likely to be greatest, there is an overall cost to the economy: aggregate income and tax receipts will be lower than they would otherwise be. Note that taxes such as Land and Building Transactions Tax (LBTT) increase the costs of migration for owner occupiers and may therefore also have an adverse effect on migration flows and hence on productivity.

For those wishing to change job, but for whom the cost of migration is high, there may be another option. They may choose to commute rather than migrate if commuting is a feasible option. While improved transport links may aid commuting, they are almost certain to have negative environmental consequences. Again, this has implications for policy. Commuting will be more attractive when the price of transport is low and the cost of housing is high. Policy interventions can change these relative costs. Thus, for example, the imposition of “green belt” planning regulations may result in increased carbon emissions by inflating house prices, tilting the balance in favour of commuting over migration. In contrast, increased fuel duties and/or public transport costs tilt the balance in favour of migration rather than commuting.

High housing costs and falling transport costs cause labour markets to increase in size as workers opt to travel greater distances to find employment. Travel to work areas (TTWAs) are defined by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) to approximate labour market areas within which at least 75% of residents both live and work. In 1991 there were 308 TTWAs covering the UK; in 2001 there were 243; and in 2011 there were 228, of which 45 were in Scotland (ONS 2016). Labour markets have thus been increasing in size. This implies longer commutes and fewer house moves.

# 2

## Migration within Scotland



## 2. Migration within Scotland

### 2.1. Classifying and measuring internal migration

We begin the discussion of migration within Scotland by looking at different ways of classifying and measuring movements within Scotland. In Scotland, movements between its 32 local authorities and its 14 health boards are classified as migration flows by the National Records of Scotland (NRS). The health board flows are based on the National Health Service Central Register (NHSCR). A record of movement is triggered when individuals change their general practitioner (GP). Data on the age and sex of the migrant are recorded, as are the origin and destination by type of area (local authority, NHS Board or SIMD (Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation)). Because they are healthier, young people typically take longer to re-register with a doctor and therefore data on their movements may be delayed or not registered at all if they move again before they require to see a doctor. This is likely to be more of a problem with men than women, since young men are even less likely than young women to visit a doctor. Short-term migration is generally difficult to calibrate accurately.

A further complicating factor is that, on average, the number of moves recorded by the NRS between health boards is only around 70% of the moves between local authorities. This suggests that 30% of moves between local authorities are within the same health board. Not all of these moves would be classified as migration: they do not all involve substantial changes in social and economic circumstances.

Some moves between Scottish local authorities, say between Dumfries and Orkney, will inevitably disrupt individuals' social circumstances. In contrast, a movement from Glasgow City to East Dunbartonshire may simply reflect a decision to change housing conditions, leaving the household's circumstances, such as their job(s), otherwise unchanged. It is important to understand that measures of the volume and characteristics of internal migration are dependent on the choice of administrative boundaries used to define movements by individuals and households.

We present two new analyses of internal movement within Scotland which examine these issues. First, we use detailed data from the 2011 Census to provide an accurate estimate of distances moved in Scotland by those who changed address a year prior to census. We find that most moves are relatively short distance. Second, we reinforce this finding by using Scottish Household Survey data to show that most changes of residence within Scotland are over short distances.

The 2011 Census measures flows between “Output Areas” during the year before the census. Individuals are asked for the address at which they lived a year ago. Those who have moved are asked for their previous address and this is assigned to an Output Area. There are more than 46,000 Output Areas in Scotland. On average, each has a population of just over 1,000. The distance moved between any pair of areas can be accurately estimated using the geographic centroids of each output area. The 2011 Census recorded more than 300,000 moves between output areas. The distribution of distances moved is shown in Figure 2.1. It is dominated by short distance moves.

Of those who moved, more than 50% moved less than 5 miles and 70% moved less than 10 miles. Some of these moves will have crossed local authority boundaries and are therefore included in estimates of migration between Scottish local authorities. However, the disruption to households making the short moves are less likely to involve substantial changes in circumstances than those associated with longer moves.

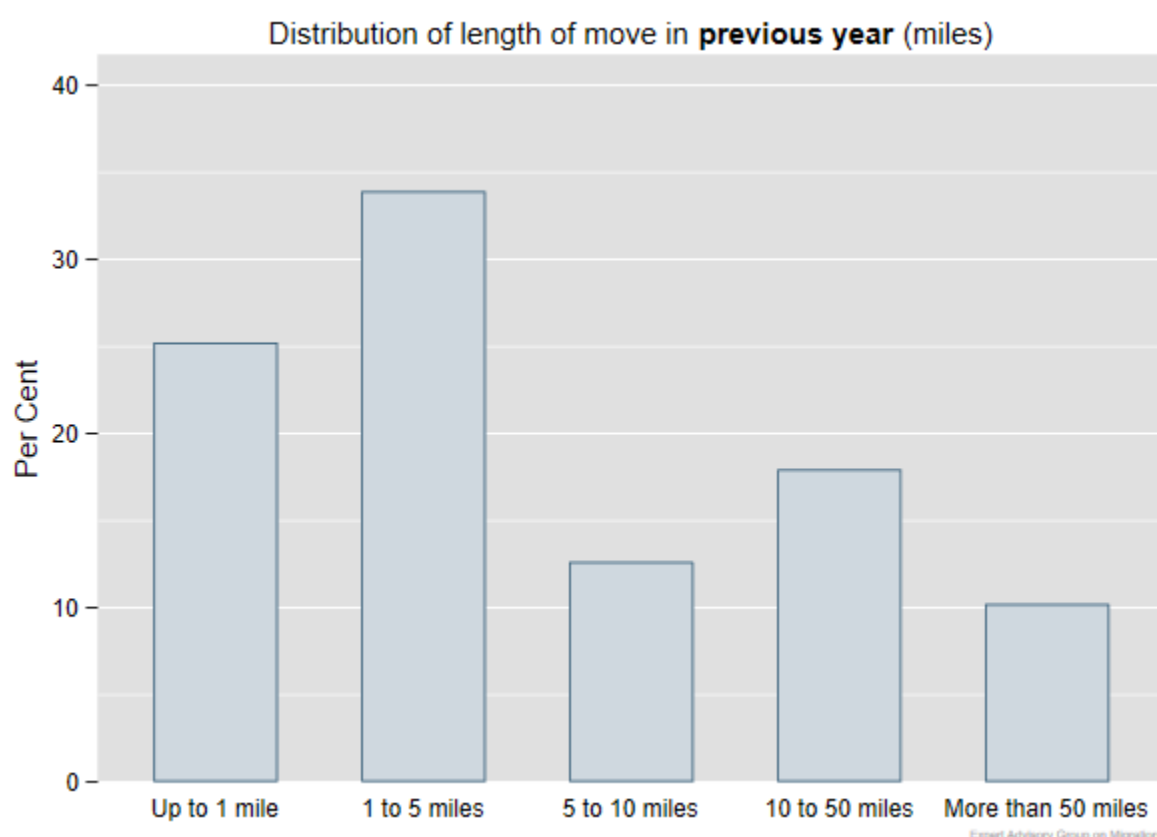
Second, we looked at the Scottish Household Survey (SHS) which asks a proportion of its respondents “Have you ever lived anywhere else?<sup>2</sup>”. It then asks for the address of their previous residence and approximately how far away it was. This provides an estimate of the distance of the respondent’s last move. Aggregating SHS data from 2016 and 2017, responses to this question confirm the Census result that most people move short distances, although in this case the question relates to whether respondents have ever moved, rather than whether they moved in the last year.

The SHS data also include those who have *never* moved. This group accounts for around 10% of respondents, while those who have moved less than 5 miles account for a further 57% of the population (Figure 2.2). Most Scots either never move, or their last move has been less than 5 miles: such moves are much less likely to disrupt individual or household circumstances than moves, say, of 50 miles or more. The Census and the SHS provide a consistent message: most changes of residence in Scotland occur over very short distances and are associated with housing choice, rather than with significant changes to economic and social circumstances. The finding that most moves are short-distance is consistent with patterns observed in many high-income countries.

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<sup>2</sup> This excludes temporary stays in, for example, halls of residence.

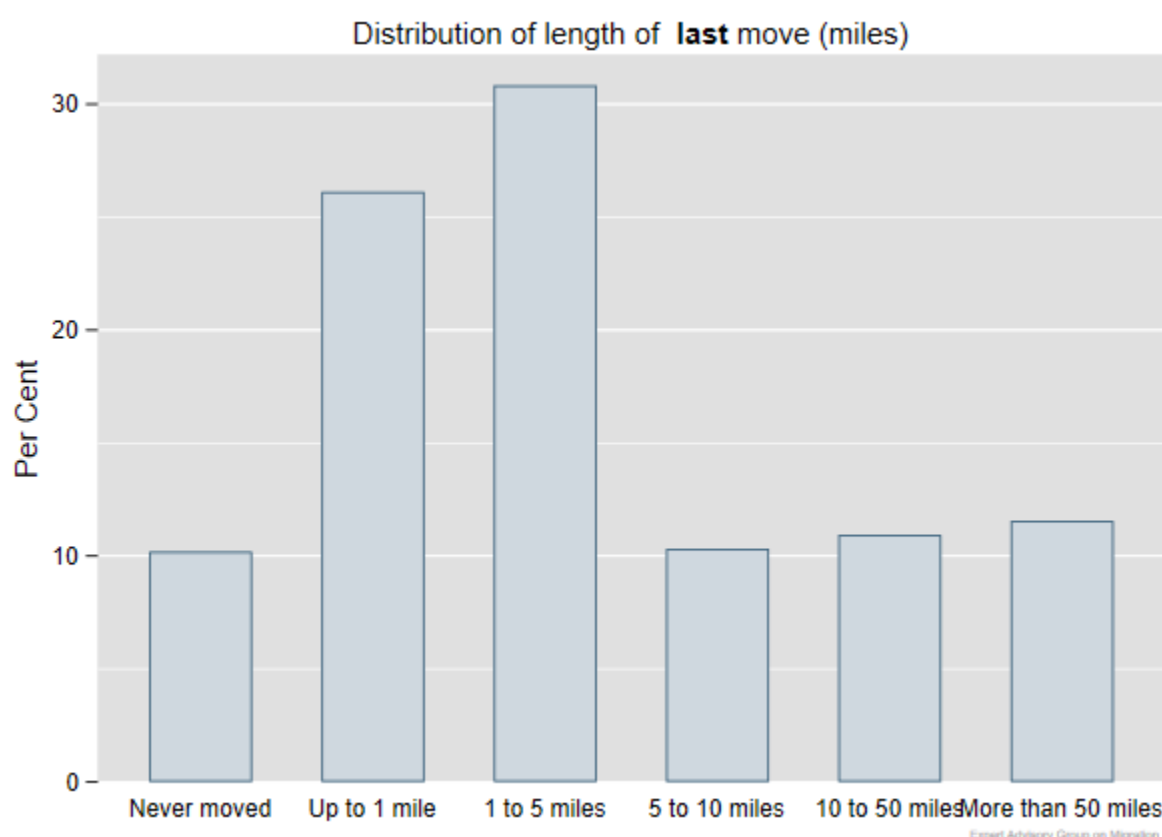
Figure 2.1: Distance moved (miles) during the last year



Source: Census 2011

The distinction between short and long-distance moves needs to be born in mind when analysing data on internal migration within Scotland. In their analysis of UK interregional migration flows between 1960 and 1991, Gordon and Molho (1998) estimate a cut-off between “national” and “regional” migration streams at 73 miles. They find that short distance moves are relatively unaffected by economic circumstances, while longer distance moves respond to differences in economic circumstances at the origin and the destination. This conclusion is interesting from a policy perspective. If longer moves are associated with improving the functioning of the economy, then governments should seek to reduce barriers to such moves relative to short distance moves. Policies addressing such barriers include providing easier access to the housing market for long-distance migrants such as reduced LBTT on longer moves, and measures that reduce the bureaucratic and social costs of relocation.

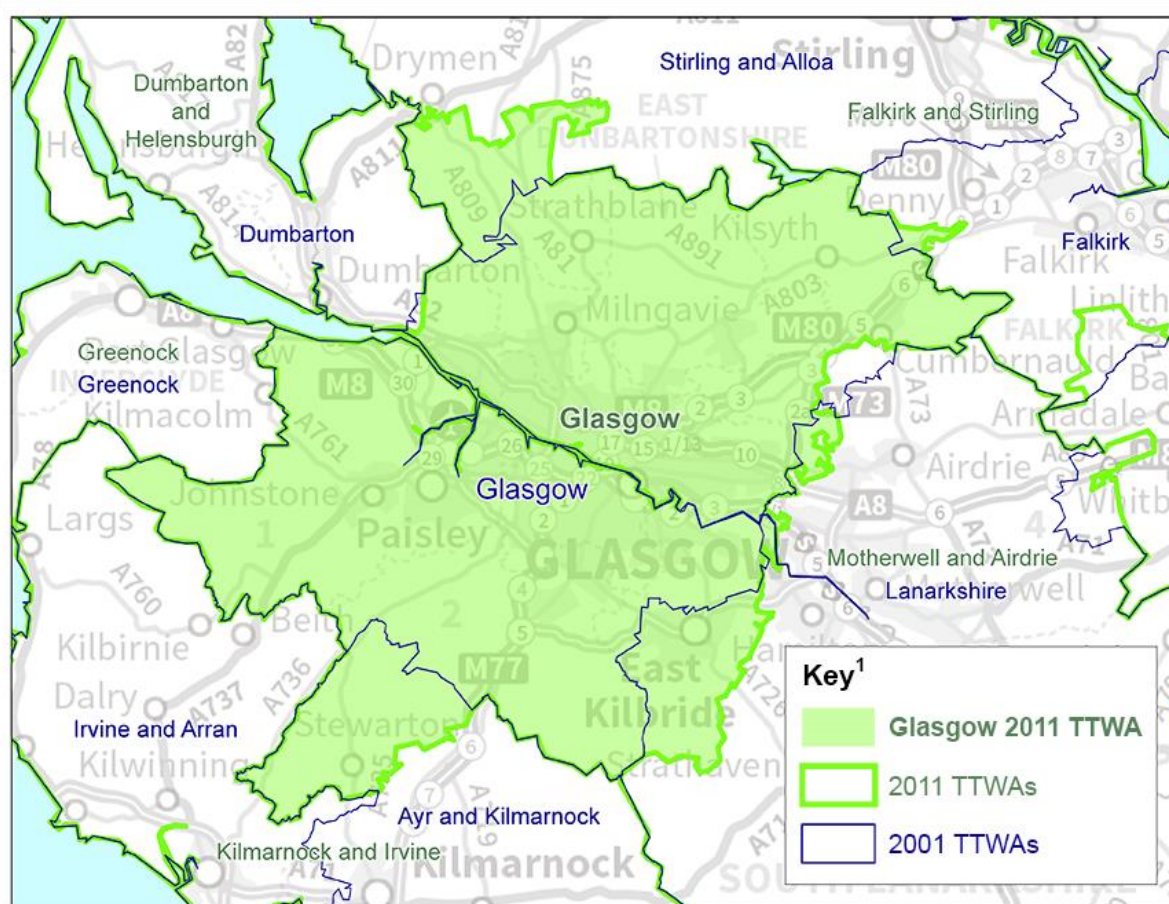
Figure 2.2: Distance of last move



Source: *Scottish Household Survey 2016-2017*

Figure 2.3 shows how Glasgow's TTWA grew between the 2001 and 2011 censuses. Parts of North Lanarkshire, East Dunbartonshire and North Ayrshire became part of the Glasgow TTWA over this period. A change in one's doctor from a Glasgow City practice to any of the practices in these other local authorities is classed as migration by the NRS. Yet many of these moves are within the Glasgow TTWA: many of these moves recorded as migration may not have involved a change of job. The growth of the Glasgow TTWA in recent years suggests that an increasing population of workers are commuting rather than moving home. As already indicated, this may be caused by a reduction in the cost of commuting relative to housing costs. Again, this is an area of possible policy intervention: although the Scottish Parliament does not have power over the taxation of vehicles and fuel, it does have the power to introduce charges and restrictions on vehicles as well as almost complete control over housing and planning.

Figure 2.3: Changes in Glasgow's Travel to Work Area between 2001 and 2011



1 Travel to Work Area (TTWA).  
Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2015

Source: [Office for National Statistics](#)

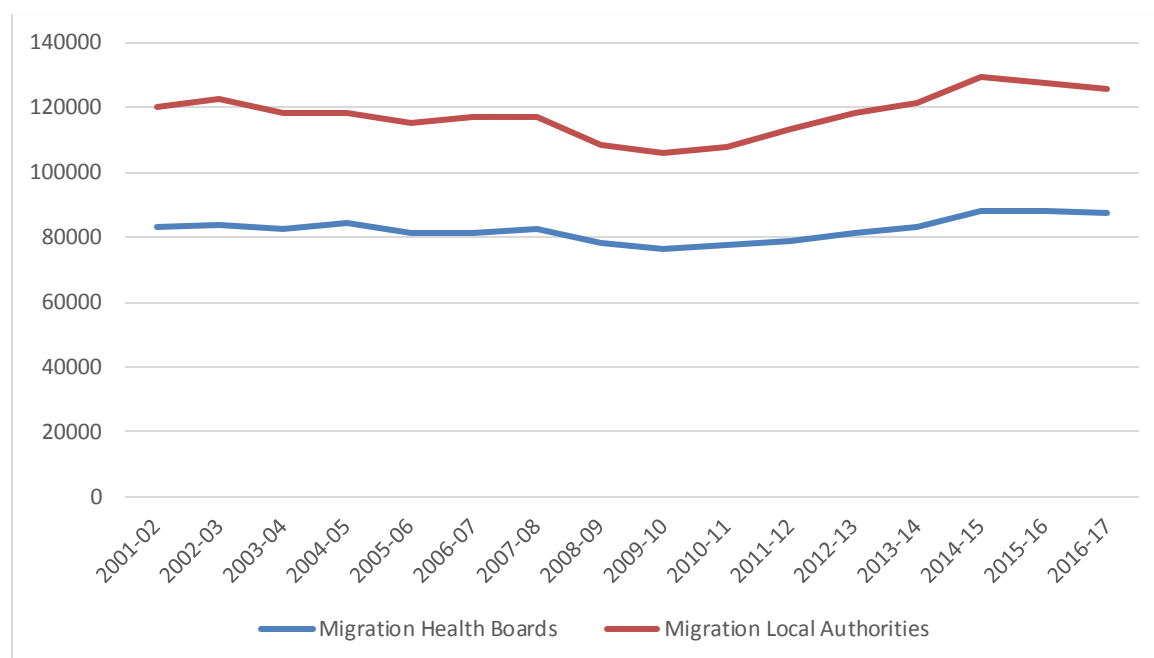
## 2.2 Movement between Local Authorities and Health Boards

The previous section showed that measures of migration between Scottish local authorities include some moves over short distances that reflect changing preferences and constraints in the housing market, rather than decisions that involve significant changes to both labour market and social circumstances. This makes it questionable whether these short distance moves should be described as migration. The housing market and commuting opportunities have likely been important factors in driving the growth of population in local authorities close to major cities such as Aberdeenshire, West Lothian, Midlothian and East Lothian, East and West Dunbartonshire and East Ayrshire.

Migration data based on health boards partially circumvents this issue since their boundaries tend to include both a major centre of population and surrounding commuter towns. Figure 2.4 offers some reassurance that there is a consistent relationship between migration measured at the local authority and the health board

levels. This graph shows the aggregate level of gross migration flows (the sum of inflows and outflows) in health boards on the one hand, and local authorities on the other.

Figure 2.4: Gross Migration between Scottish Health Boards and Local Authorities 2001 to 2017



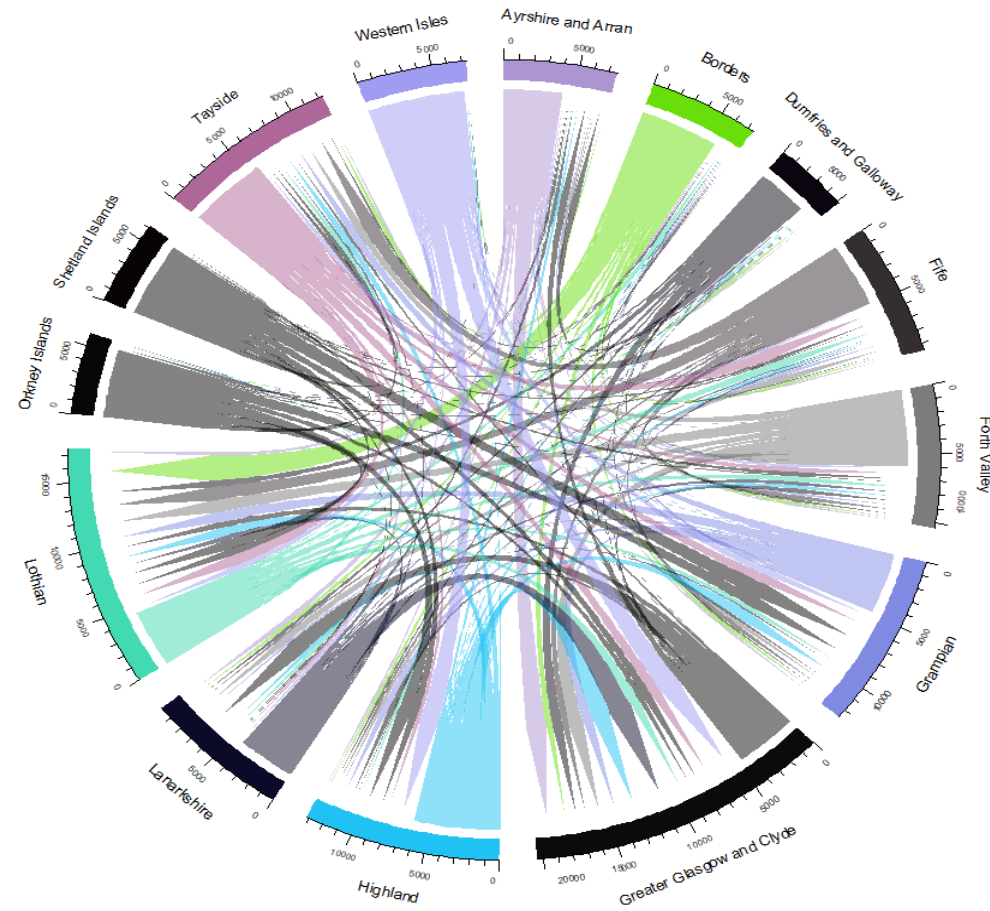
Source: National Health Service Central Register

As one might expect, gross migration flows between health boards are significantly less than those recorded between local authorities. The ratio of total flows between health boards to those between local authorities has stayed at around 70 % since the beginning of the century, suggesting that, at least over this period, the relationship between these two measures of internal migration in Scotland has been fairly stable. The remaining 30% of moves must occur within health board areas and much of these will be short distance moves between adjacent local authorities. Even so, around 80,000 people, or 1.5% of the Scottish population, move across health board boundaries each year.

This finding confirms that, while measures of migration between local authorities may overstate the true level of migration as conventionally defined, they bear a reasonably stable relationship to “true” migration levels at least since the turn of the century. Nevertheless, it will be important to bear this finding in mind for the penultimate section, in which we discuss local authority initiatives to alter migration patterns. Local authority policies aimed at attracting public sector workers from elsewhere may not lead to an overall benefit to Scotland if they simply result in movements between adjacent authorities.



Figure 2.5: Migration Flows Between Scotland's Health Boards



Source: National Health Service Central Register

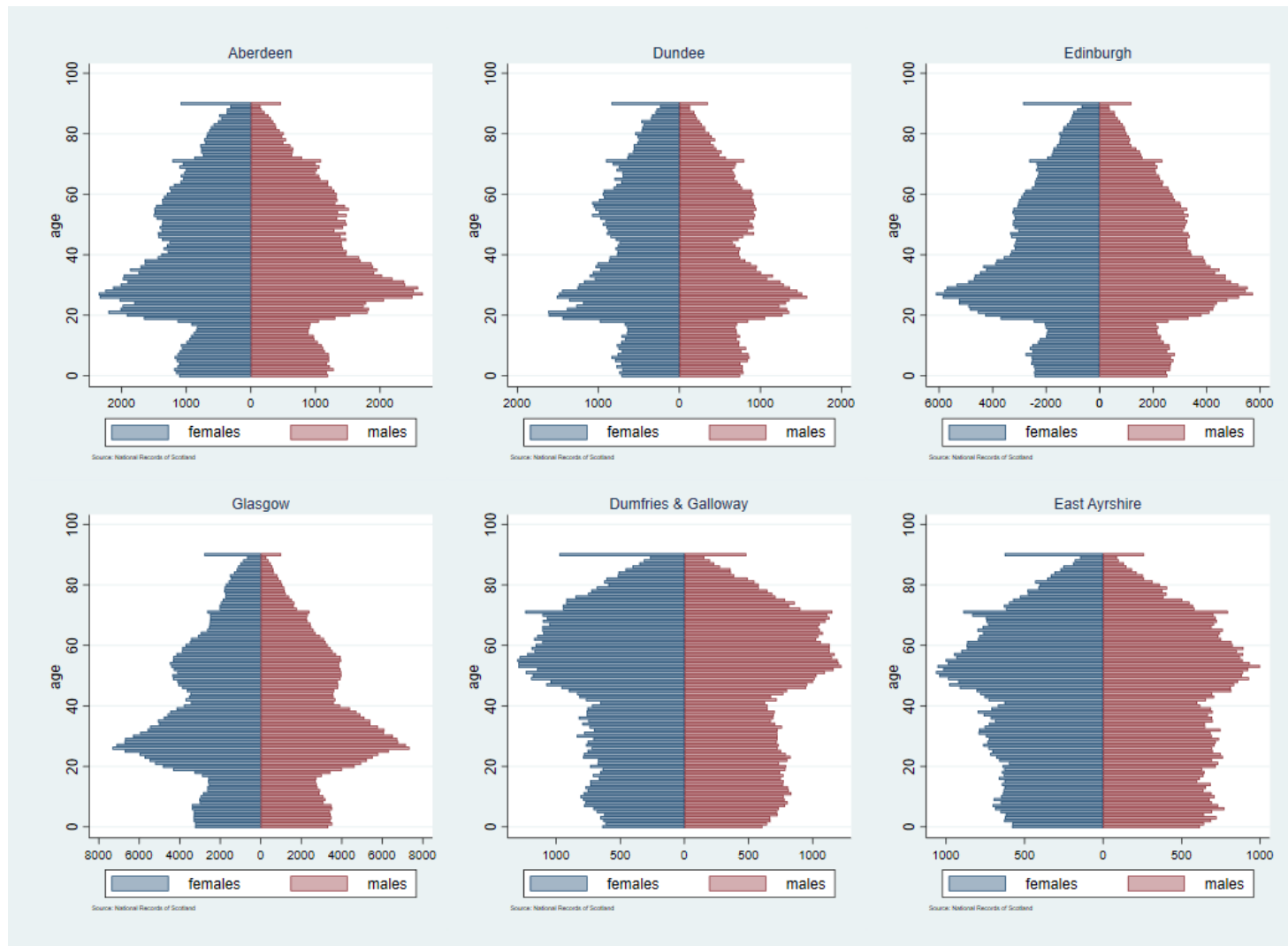
Migration flows between health boards within Scotland are shown in Figure 2.5. The analysis focuses on health boards rather than local authorities, in order to capture longer distance migration. The figure shows migrant flows between each pair of health boards, adjusted for population size at the origin. The relative size and direction of flows is indicated by the width and direction of the arrows. Lothian and Greater Glasgow and Clyde have the widest bases because they experience the largest inflow and outflow of migrants per 1000 population.

The figure reveals some long-standing population flows that may be driven by geography and transport links such as the long-standing connection between Grampian and the Northern Isles, links between Borders and Lothian, and so on. But Greater Glasgow and Lothian draw significantly from almost all other health boards – this is perhaps a reflection of student flows into Glasgow and Edinburgh from across the rest of Scotland, which are also highlighted in Figure 2.6.

Figure 2.5 suggests that Scotland's largest cities are focal points for migration, in respect both of inflows and outflows. Figure 2.6 demonstrates how this effect combines with the observation that migrants are typically young. It shows what used to be known as the "population pyramid" for each of Scotland's four largest cities in 2016. It also includes four further population pyramids, for a group of Scotland's other local authorities - East Ayrshire, Dumfries and Galloway, Borders and the Western Isles.



Figure 2.6: Selected Local Authority Population Estimates 2018 by Single Year of Age

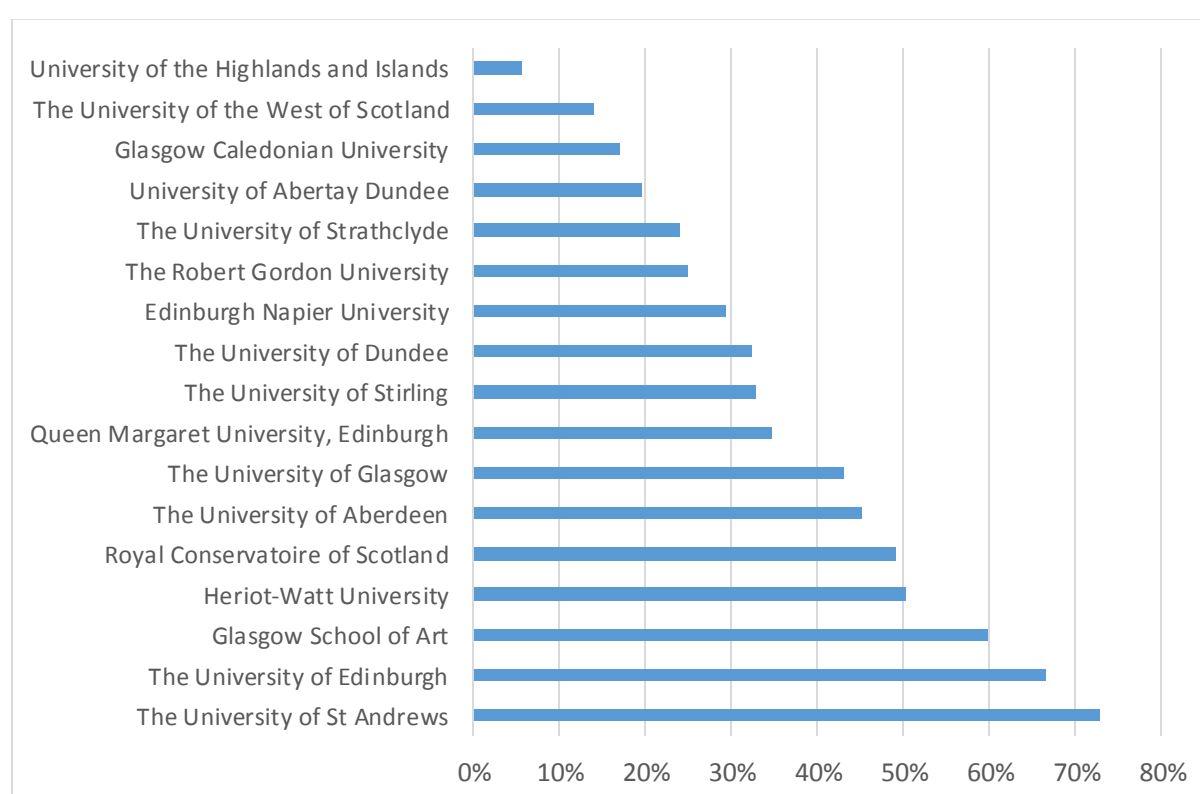


Source: National Records of Scotland

Not only do Scotland's cities receive a substantial proportion of young people from other parts of the country, they also benefit from considerable inflows, also of young people, from the rest of the UK.

Figure 2.7 shows the proportion of students from outwith Scotland studying at Scotland's Higher Education (HE) institutions in 2017-18. They comprised almost 32,000 students who were domiciled in other parts of the UK. Clearly this is larger than current levels of net migration to Scotland, but many of these students will return to rUK once their studies are complete. It is only those who choose to remain who make a long-term impact on net migration to Scotland.

**Figure 2.7: Proportion of HE Students Studying at Scottish Institutions from rest of UK 2017-18**



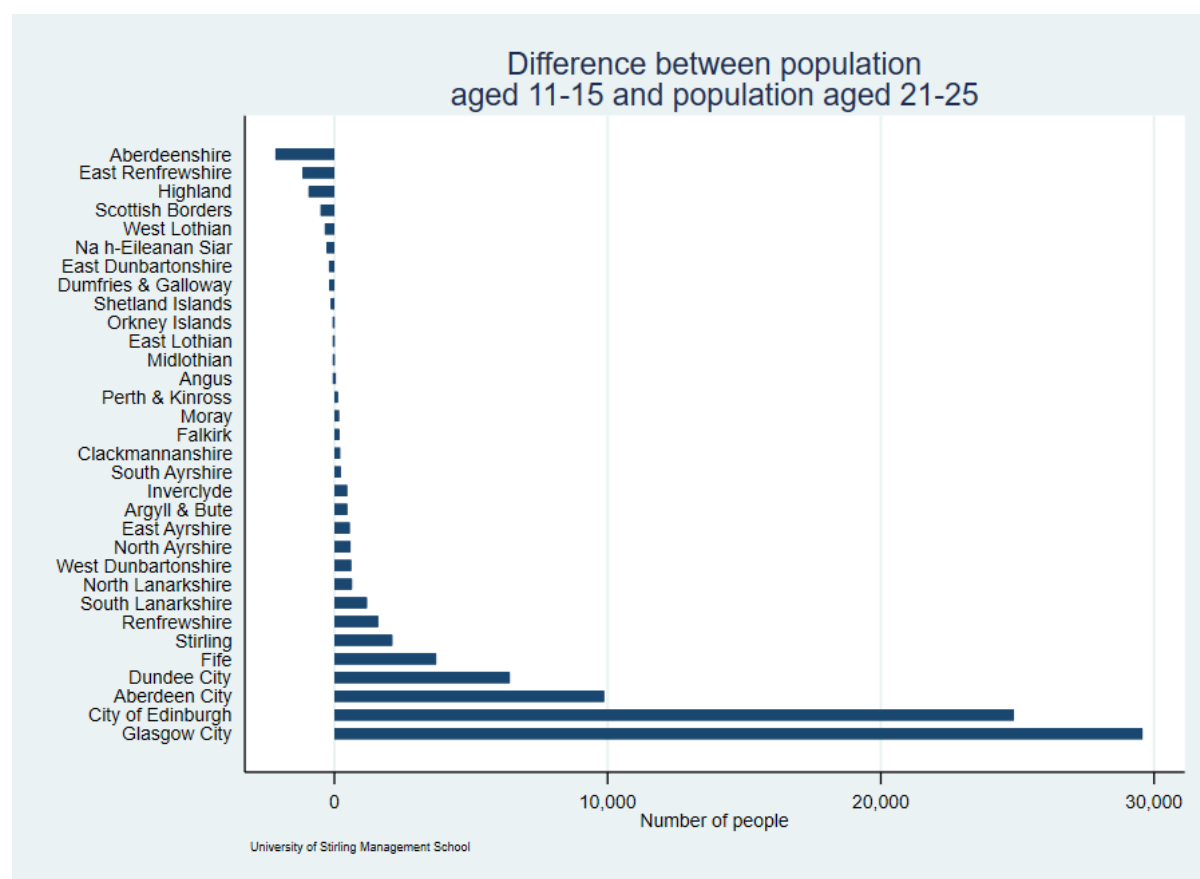
*Source: Higher Education Statistics Authority*

These findings imply that Scotland's major cities are attractive both to young people from within and from outside Scotland. Migrant inflows therefore inflate the population that is brought up within these cities. This is shown in

Figure 2.8, which uses the 2018 NRS population mid-year estimates for Scotland by age group and local authority. It demonstrates that the population aged between 21 and 25 in the major cities substantially exceeds the school age population (aged 11-15) in Glasgow, Edinburgh and Aberdeen and Dundee. These cities are therefore gaining young people both from the rest of Scotland, the rest of the UK and the rest of the world due to the educational and employment opportunities that they offer: siting major educational institutions in the large cities obviously has externalities for

Scotland's smaller urban and rural areas. This is an important observation for understanding how economic activity is distributed within Scotland. It also opens the vexed question of whether economic development effort should reinforce or counteract the drift to the cities.

Figure 2.8: Difference Between School Age and Young Adult Population by Local Authority, Scotland 2018

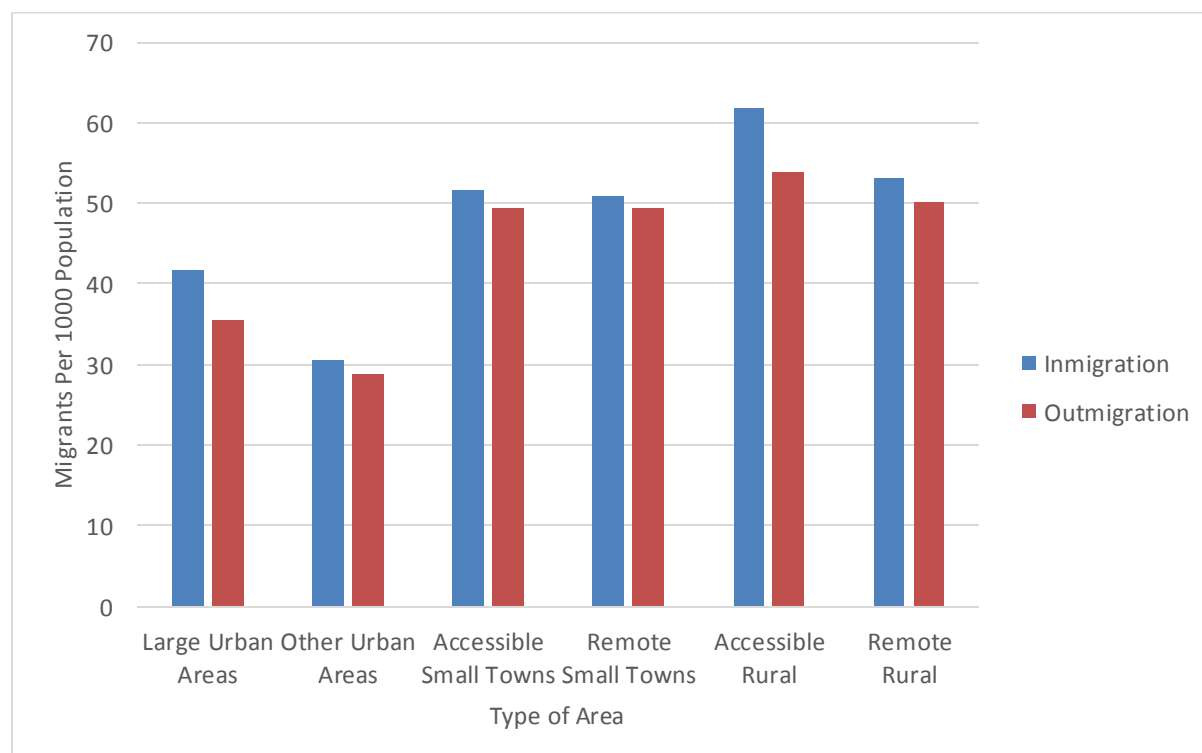


Source: Own Calculations from National Records of Scotland Data

Yet another way to classify migration is by the six-fold urban/rural split used by the Scottish Government. In-migration and outmigration rates per 1000 population are shown in Figure 2.9 for the six-fold urban-rural split. The population of these areas differs widely. The 2018 NRS population estimates suggest that large urban areas account for 35% of the Scottish population, while other urban areas account for a further 36%. In contrast, the accessible rural and remote rural only comprise 11% and 6% of the population respectively. Thus, although the rates of immigration and emigration for the large urban areas are lower than those of the accessible rural areas, the large urban areas averaged a net inflow of 11,500 people annually over the period 2010-11 to 2017-18, compared with an average net 4,800 moving to accessible rural locations.

Nevertheless, Figure 2.9 illustrates that Scotland's "Other Urban Areas" have relatively low rates of immigration and outmigration of population compared with other area types. Other Urban Areas comprise towns, mainly in the Central Belt, which typically do not have major universities and have lost industries that were central to their economies during the last few decades. Low rates of immigration and outmigration may indicate relatively sluggish economic performance, though further research would be needed to establish this more rigorously.

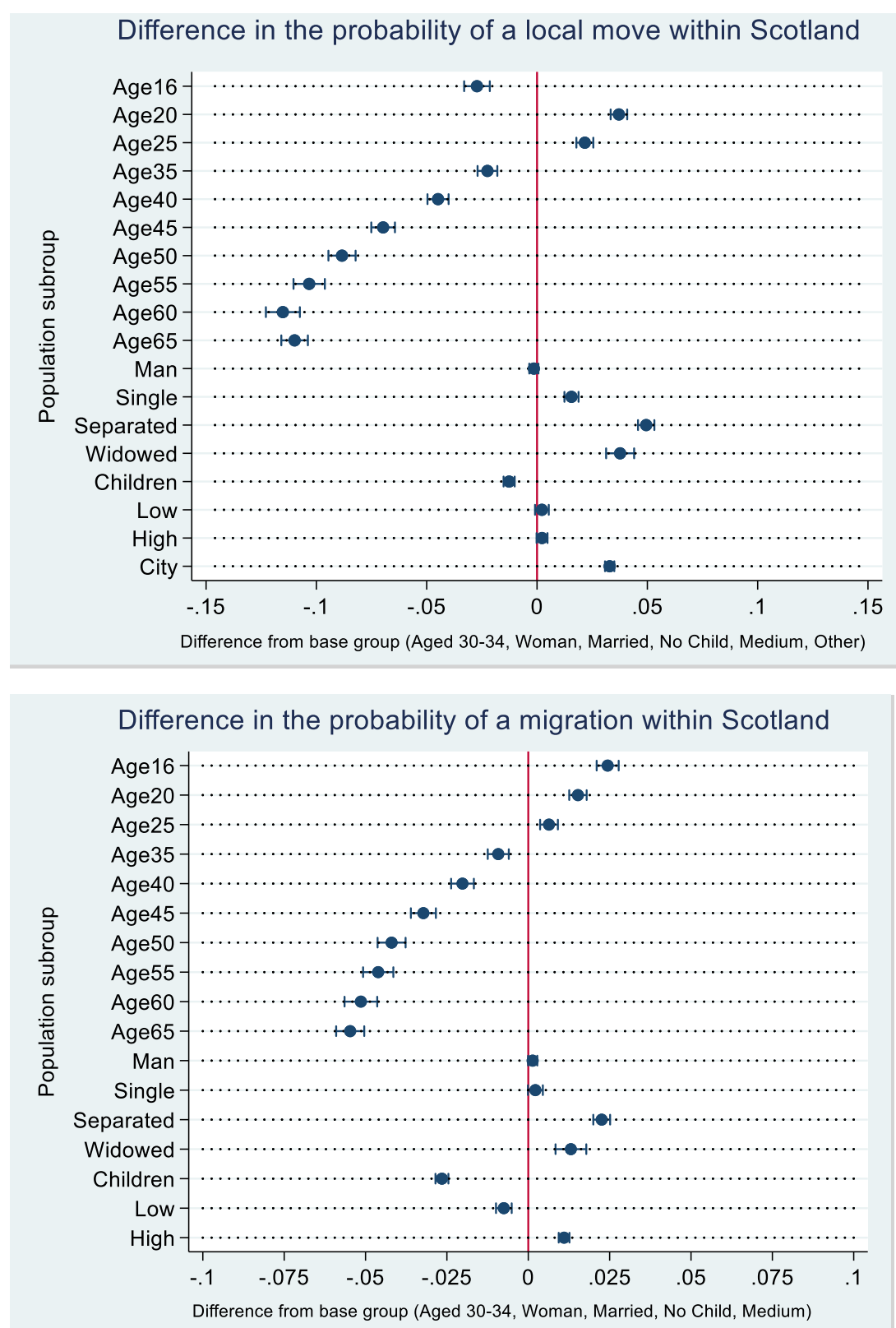
Figure 2.9: In-migration and outmigration rates for six-fold rural/urban population split 2018



Source: *National Records of Scotland*

Who are the people who move within Scotland? Previous analysis showed that the majority of movers are young adults. What are the other individuals' characteristics that are associated with elevated spatial mobility? We investigated the probability of moving within Scotland using the 2011 census microdata. We distinguished between short-distance or local moves ( $\leq 9$  km) and between medium- or long-distance moves ( $> 9$  km). Almost 70% of the moves were local moves according to the used definition; this finding is consistent with our previous analysis (see Figures 2.1 and 2.2). There is a clear age-pattern in the probability of moving within Scotland. The likelihood of moving is the highest in late teens and in twenties, and it significantly declines over age, as expected (Figure 2.10). Interestingly, the likelihood of moving locally is somewhat lower among those in ages 16-19; however, their relatively low local mobility is compensated by their high migration propensity: most of them move over longer distances for further education or for job-related reasons. There are no significant gender differences in the likelihood of moving.

Figure 2.10 The probability of a residential relocation (9km or less) and migration (more than 9km) in Scotland, 2010-11



Source: The 2011 census microdata (5% sample).

Unmarried groups, especially separated and widowed individuals, are more likely to move than married individuals, particularly over short distances. Most of these moves are related to major life events (i.e. divorce or the death of a partner), although previous studies have shown that separated people are also more mobile because of residential instability and housing insecurity after separation. Couples with children are less likely to move long distance because of the increased economic and psychological costs of moving family and adjusting to a new social environment, especially when children are of school age. In terms of education, there is little difference in the likelihood of moving locally, whereas a clear educational gradient exists in migration patterns: the highly educated (i.e. individuals with a degree) are more likely to move long distance than other groups. Some of these moves may be related to the end of studies; other important factors are wider options and resources due to higher education, and a wider dispersion of jobs for highly educated people (Kulu 2008).

Finally, the analysis shows that individuals who live in the four main Scottish cities (Glasgow, Edinburgh, Aberdeen and Dundee) are more likely to move locally than those living elsewhere in the country. Some elevated mobility observed in the cities may result from the moves from neighbouring local authorities to the city centres (the census microdata contain only information on the current location of movers). However, research shows that people who live in big cities are less likely to leave the cities than residents living elsewhere; they move locally instead (Kulu 2008). Overall, short-distance moves in Scotland are mostly driven by partnership and family changes, whereas long-distance moves are related to education and employment opportunities, although this distinction is never clear cut.

# 3

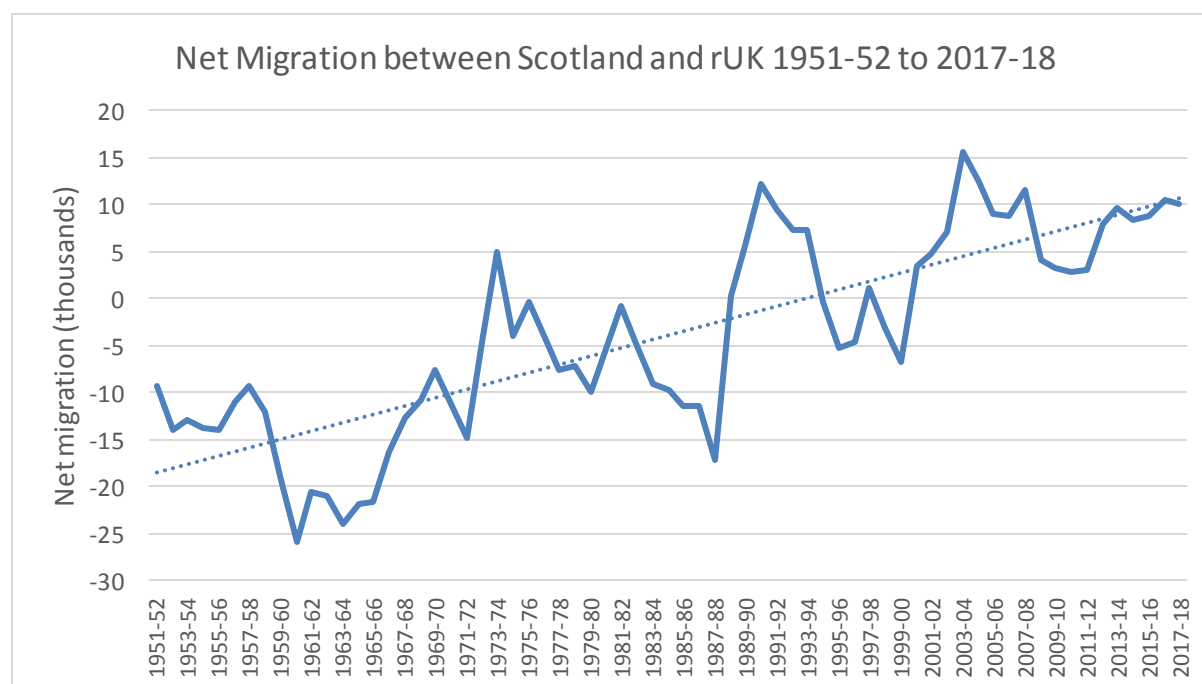
## **Migration Between Scotland and rUK**

### 3. Migration Between Scotland and rUK

Data on migration trends between Scotland and rUK are regularly collected by the Office for National Statistics (ONS). Within Scotland these data are provided by the NRS, based on the National Health Service Central Register (NHSCR). In England, a similar approach to measuring migration uses the NHS Patient Register. As we saw in Chapter 2, records of movement are triggered when individuals register with a new GP. We also saw that these data are reliable, but do under-count males, and those moving for a shorter period of time.

Figure 3.1 shows estimates of net migration between Scotland and rUK over the period 1951-52 to 2017-18<sup>3</sup>. During this period, Scotland changed from being a nation that typically experienced a net outflow of population to one where migration had a positive effect on population growth. Between 1951-52 and 2000-01, 399,000 more people left Scotland for other parts of the UK than moved to Scotland from rUK; since mid-2001, population flows from rUK have increased Scotland's population by 137,000.

Figure 3.1: Scotland: Net Migration between Scotland and rUK 1951-52 to 2017-18



Source: *National Records of Scotland*

Despite considerable fluctuations, there is clearly an upward trend, and Scotland has gained population from rUK especially since the 2000-2001. However, gross migration (the sum of migration flows between Scotland and rUK) has fallen. The average annual gross flow between 1981-82 and 1999-00 was equivalent to 2.03%

<sup>3</sup> [Office for National Statistics \(2018\)](#) describes how migration statistics are constructed for Scotland and the UK.



of the Scottish resident population. Since then, it has averaged 1.78%, a 12% reduction. Why fewer people are migrating between Scotland and rUK is unclear. Research on internal migration in the UK has shown a decline in migration rates between 1971 and 2011; the levels of short-distance (less than 10km) moves have declined even more than that of longer-distance moves (Champion and Shuttleworth 2017). Possible reasons for the declining mobility rates are population ageing, the increased share of dual-earner couples, the development of telecommunication technologies (i.e. opportunities have opened up to work from home), and the reduced need to change job (and thus move) as labour markets within countries have become more homogeneous and information about opportunities (or the lack of them) elsewhere has improved significantly (Kulu et al. 2018).

Table 3.1 summarises the information in Figure 3.1, dividing the period into 1951-52 to 2000-01 and 2001-02 to 2017-18. It also includes information on net migration between Scotland and overseas to help calibrate its relative importance to population change in Scotland over this period.

Table 3.1: Total Migration to and from Scotland (thousands)

Year	Net migration			Migration flows		Overseas migration	
	Total	Rest of UK	Overseas	Rest of UK migration In	Rest of UK migration Out	Overseas migration In	Overseas migration Out
1951-52 to 2000-01	-890.6	-399.3	-474.2				
2001-02 to 2017-18	359.4	137.3	222.1	850.8	713.6	633.2	411.1

Source: [National Records of Scotland](#)

Two points emerge. First, net migration from rUK and overseas have followed similar patterns before and after the turn of the century, namely a net outflow from Scotland during the 20<sup>th</sup> century and a net inflow in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Second, overseas migration has had a larger effect on the size of Scotland's population over the entire period than has migration between Scotland and rUK. Whether the pattern that has emerged this century is maintained will depend on the continuing attractiveness of Scotland relative to other locations and on the migration policies of the UK and other governments which affect the ease or difficulty of changing location within the UK or outside the UK. For example, the large net outward flow from Scotland to countries overseas during the last century was possible because many developed, largely English-speaking, countries were seeking to attract migrants at that time and also favoured migrants from English-speaking countries.

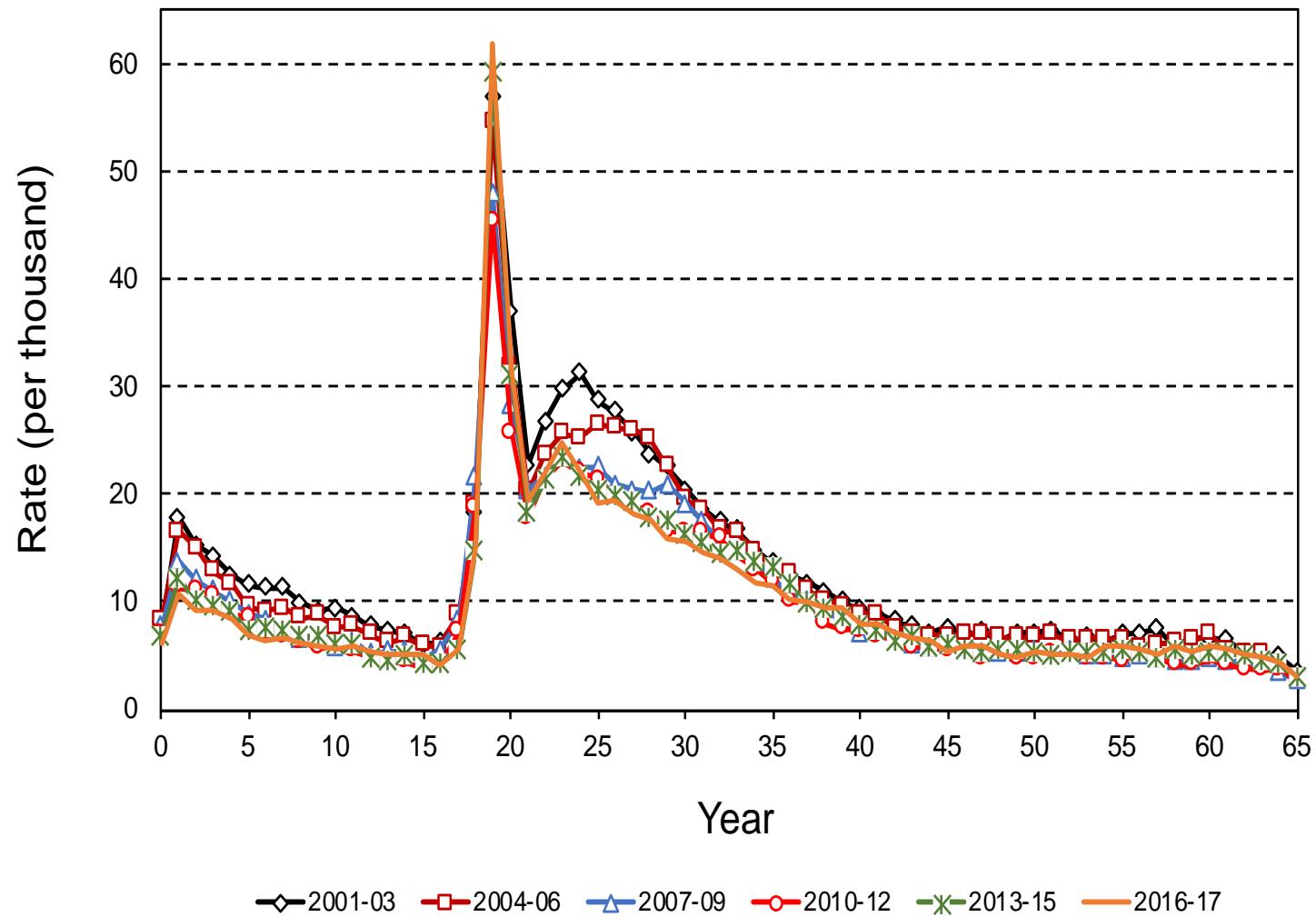
Table 3.1 also shows gross flows between Scotland and both rUK and overseas for the period 2001-02 to 2017-18. Gross flow data are not available for the entire period from 1951-52. The data show that even though the net flow between Scotland and rUK is smaller than that between Scotland and overseas, the gross flows between Scotland and rUK are much larger than those to and from overseas locations. This

illustrates again the importance of distance acting as a proxy for the costs of migration. Greater distance increases costs and therefore reduces the prevalence of migration.

Most people who arrive in Scotland are in the age range 18 to 29. Migration from rUK has two peaks: one is in ages 18-20 and related to the student migration, and another in the late 20s and early 30s. Although analysis shows that women have remarkably higher in-migration rates than men, low migration rates among young men, as noted earlier, are very likely related to an undercount of their moves rather than gender differences; this is also why we report migration rates by age only for women in this study. There is also some migration among the very young, indicating in-migration of couples with children.

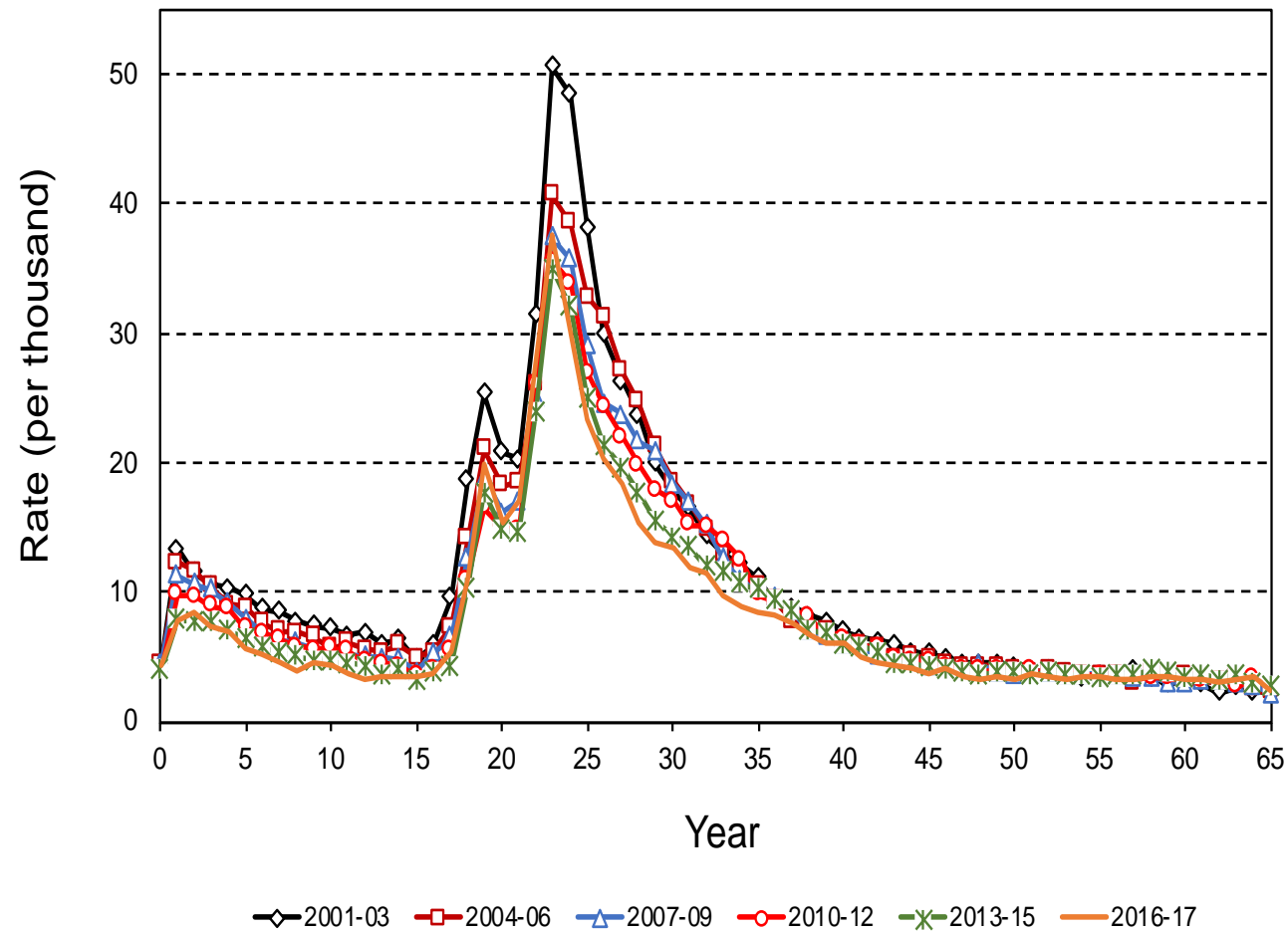
The age pattern of migration has stayed relatively stable over the last two decades, suggesting that student movement dominates migration flows between rUK and Scotland. Out-migration from Scotland to rUK is concentrated in similar age groups as in-migration, except that the peak in ages 18-20 is significantly lower, suggesting that some young people in Scotland leave for England for studies, though the number is low (see figure 3.3). Out-migration rates, especially in the mid and late 20s, have significantly declined over the past decades indicating an increased likelihood of students from rUK staying in Scotland after studies, although many students are still returning back home after studies (and a few years of working) in Scotland. The analysis of trends in net migration supports this observation: Scotland is losing people in ages 22 to 26 to rUK, but in lower numbers than was the case at the beginning of this century).

Figure 3.2 Scotland's in-migration rate from rUK among women by age, 2001-2017



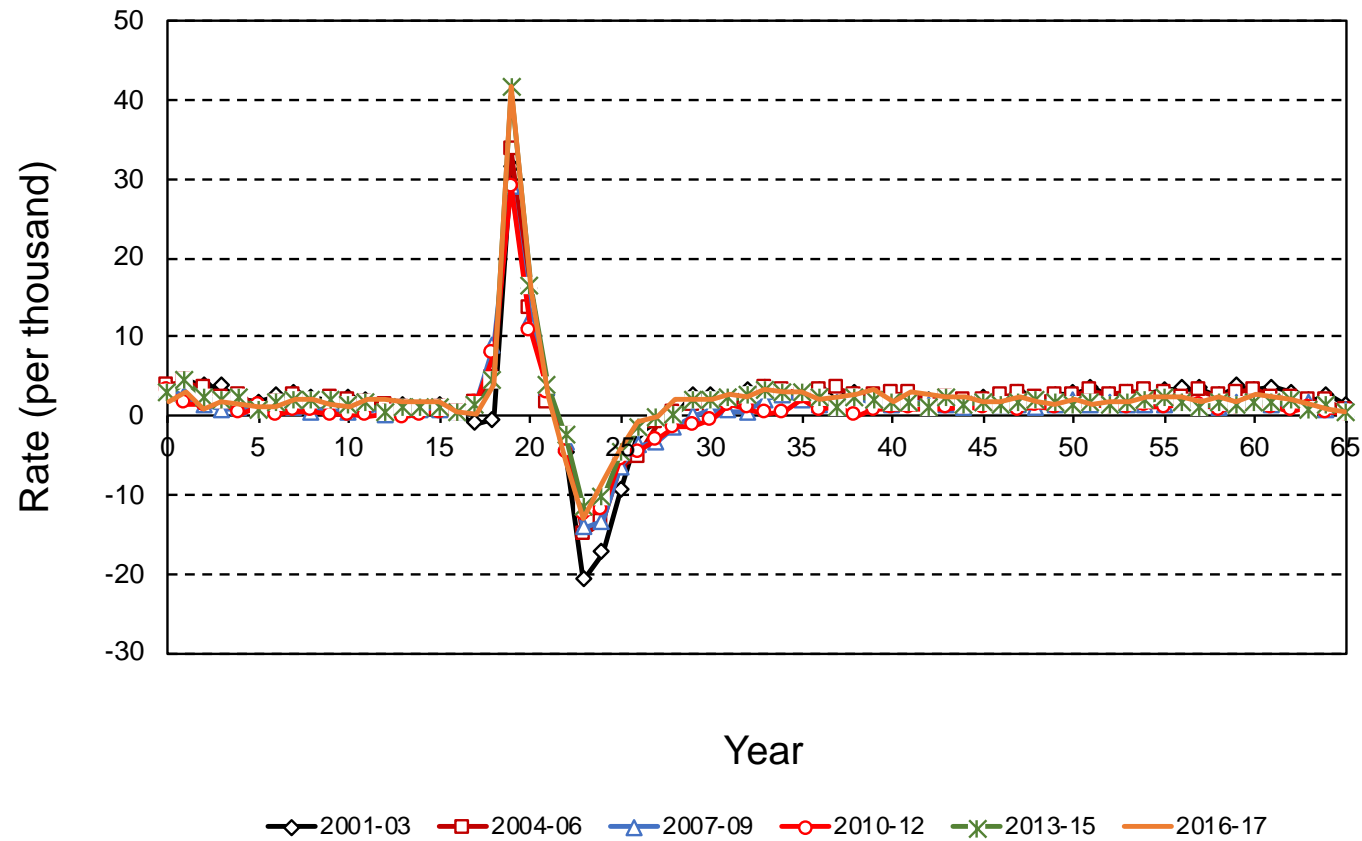
Source: [National Records of Scotland](#); Note: 2001-03=2001-02, 2002-03, 2003-04

Figure 3.3 Scotland's out-migration rate to rUK among women by age, 2001-2017



Source: [National Records of Scotland](#)

Figure 3.4 Scotland's net migration rate with rUK among women by age, 2001-2017

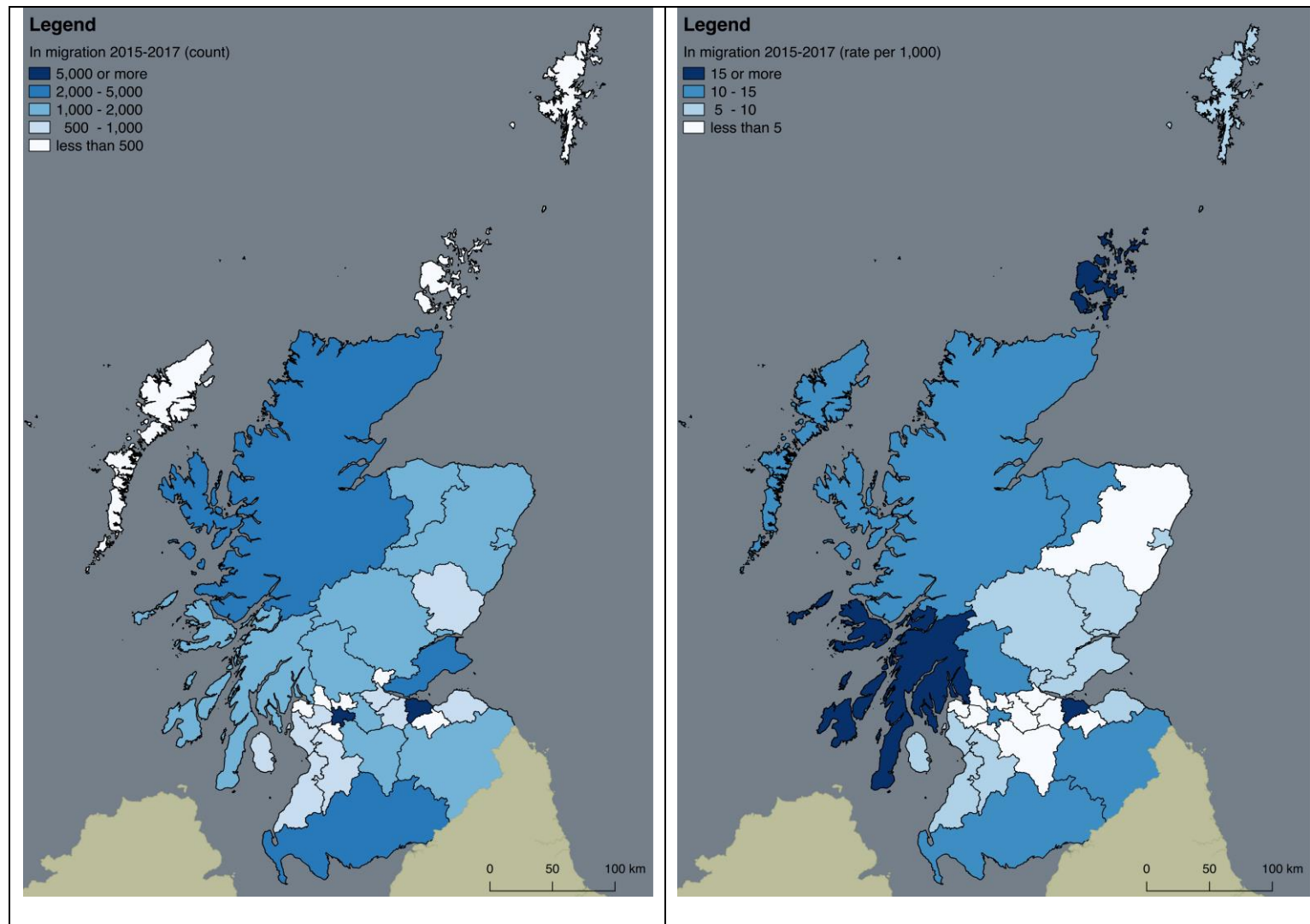


Source: [National Records of Scotland](#)

Figure 3.5 shows the size of migration flows from rUK to Scottish local authorities between 2015 and 2017, derived from the NHSCR data. Clearly, most migrants from rUK move to the two largest cities, Edinburgh and Glasgow, which offer the best opportunities for studies and employment. Other popular local authority areas include Highland, Fife and Dumfries and Galloway. In contrast, the islands, Inverclyde, East and West Dunbartonshire, Clackmannan and Midlothian are less popular destinations. Translating these gross migration flows into rates by dividing by the population of the destination local authority, a different picture emerges. While Edinburgh receives large numbers of migrants relative to its population, the inflow rate to Glasgow is lower relative to its population. All local authorities adjacent to Glasgow have very low rates of migration, as does Midlothian. However, as implied previously (page 16), low rates of migration in these local authorities may reflect commuting patterns to both Edinburgh and Glasgow. Meanwhile, even though the absolute number of migrants is low, rates of migration to Orkney and Argyll and Bute are relatively high. Aberdeenshire continues to suffer from the difficulties of the oil and gas sector and consequently rates of immigration to this local authority are well below the Scottish average.

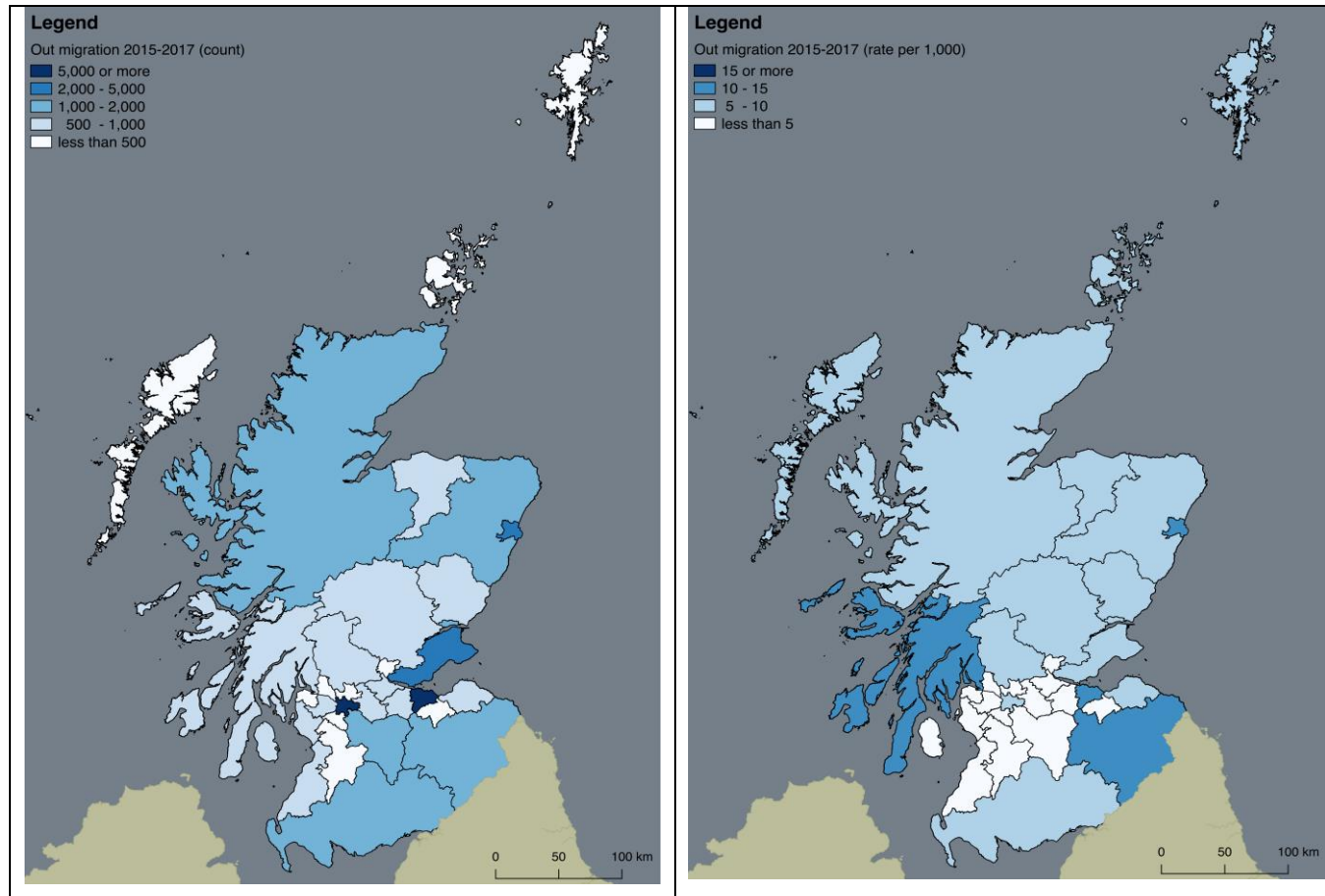
Edinburgh and Glasgow experience the largest out-migration flows (Figure 3.6), as expected, although out-migration has declined over time. As with in-migration, many of the areas around Glasgow have low out-migration rates. Thus, unlike Scotland's major cities, these local authorities are characterised both by low in-migration and low out-migration from/to rUK. They have a legacy of industrialisation, economic decline and adverse labour market outcomes.

Figure 3.5 In-migration count and rate in Scotland by council area, 2015-2017 (the average over three years)



Source: [National Records of Scotland](#)

Figure 3.6 Out-migration count and rate in Scotland by council area, 2015-2017 (the average over three years)



Source: [National Records of Scotland](#)

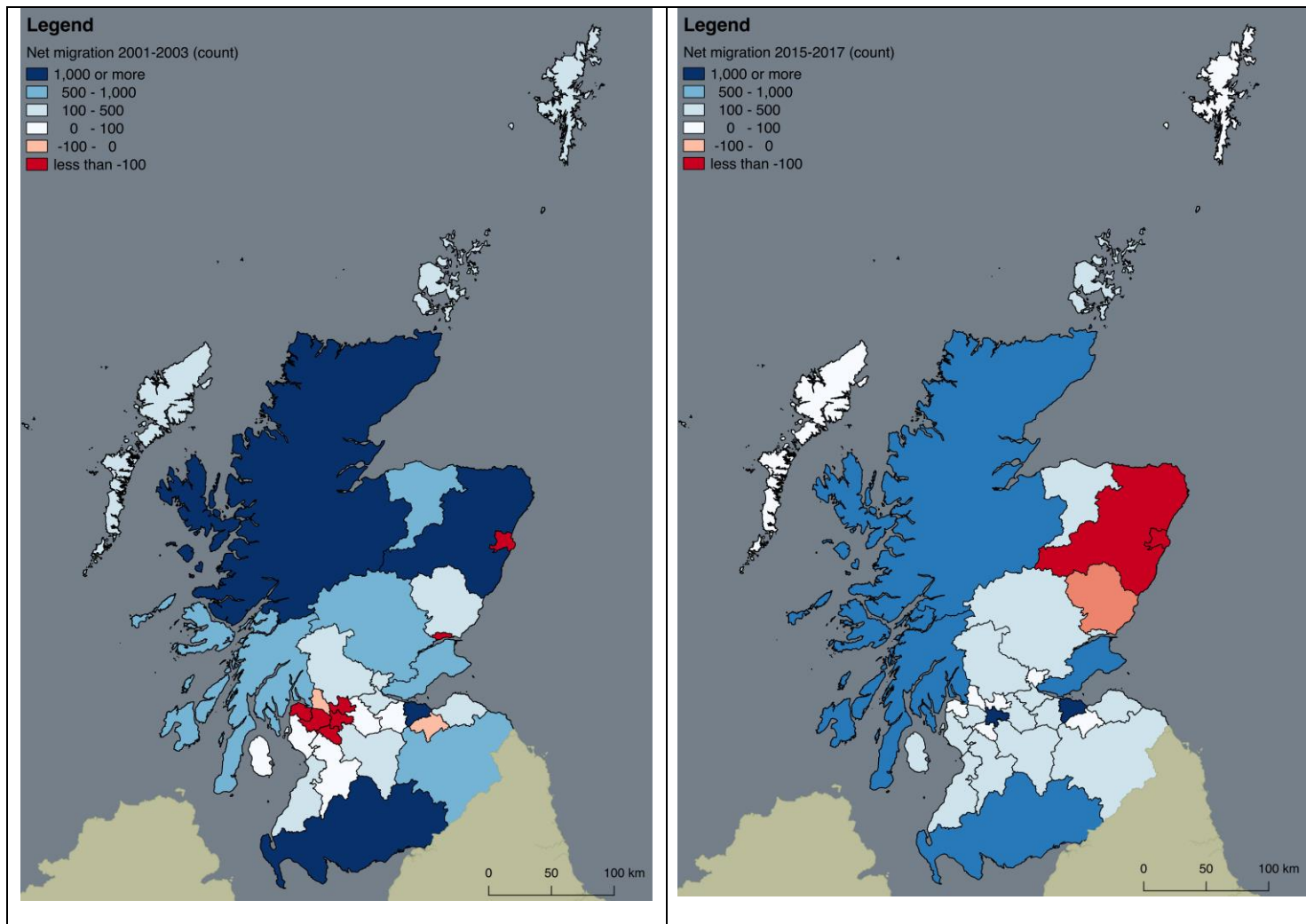


Figure 3.7 shows the size of net flows by council in 2001-03 and 2015-17. Interestingly, while most big cities (except Edinburgh) experienced negative net migration with the rUK in the beginning of this century, the patterns have changed: all cities, except Aberdeen and its surrounding areas now receive more migrants from rUK than they lose them. This supports the hypothesis that many young people from England stay in Scotland after studies and find employment in one of the big cities. Recent migration trends in the Aberdeen region are largely explained by reduced migration from rUK to the region, due to the decline in the oil and gas industry in the region. It is noteworthy that Edinburgh has experienced the most significant inflow of migrants, reflecting the current strength of its economy. Net immigration has also expanded the populations of Argyll and Bute, the Highlands, Dumfries and Galloway, while the continuing difficulties of the north-east have led to higher levels of out-migration for Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire and Angus than other parts of Scotland.

Aside from age, sex and geography, what else do we know about characteristics of migrants? The 2011 census data and the Labour Force Survey (2016-19) provide a wealth of information on migrants' characteristics. A description of the LFS dataset is contained in Appendix A.

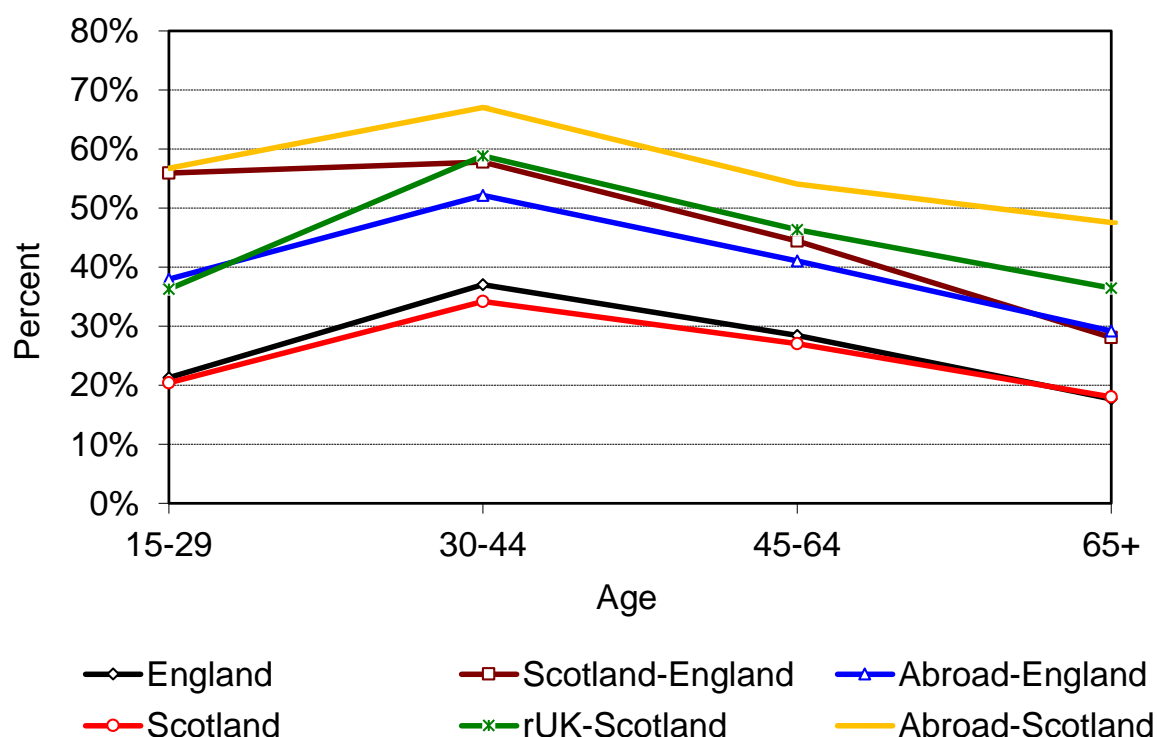
The analysis of migrants using the 2011 census individual-level data (a five percent sample) supports that migrants (or people who moved a year prior to the census date) are in their twenties; individuals in that age group are even more dominant among international migrants both to Scotland and to rUK. On average, migrants have higher educational levels than non-migrants. The percentage of individuals with degrees is 10 to 20 percentage points higher among migrants than non-migrants (Figure 3.8). Interestingly, the share of people with tertiary education is particularly high among international migrants to Scotland: around 60% of them have a degree. Scotland and the UK more widely have thus enjoyed the arrival of many individuals with high human capital over the last two decades (assuming that the patterns have been relatively similar over years).

Figure 3.7 Net migration in Scotland by council area, 2001-2003 and 2015-2017 (the average over three years)



Source: [National Records of Scotland](#)

Figure 3.8 Percentage of individuals with tertiary degree among England's and Scotland's population by age, 2011



Source: *The 2011 Census Microdata (a 5% sample).*

Analysis of Labour Force Survey between 2016 and 2019 by area of residence and country of birth supports the hypothesis that migrants between Scotland and rUK have higher levels of education and also of pay than do non-migrants. Hourly pay for those born in Scotland who are resident in Scotland is £11.13 per hour (Table 3.2). But those born in Scotland who have moved to other parts of the UK earn almost £15 per hour. Similarly, those born in other parts of the UK tend to earn more on moving to Scotland than those who remain in rUK. Thus, those born in England who moved to Scotland typically earn £13.84 per hour; whereas earnings for this group in rUK (mainly England) average only £11.54 per hour.

Table 3.2: Median Hourly Pay (2016-2019) Scotland and rUK Residents by Country of Birth

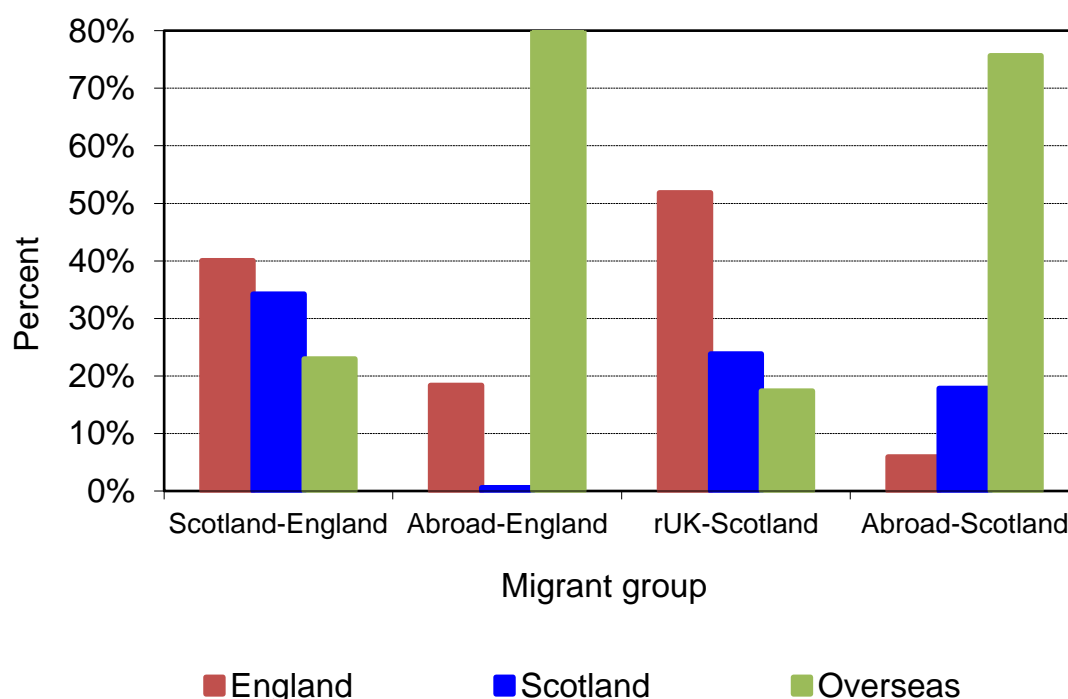
Country of birth	Area of Residence	
	rUK	Scotland
England	11.54	13.84
Northern Ireland	10.71	14.43
Scotland	14.97	11.13
Wales	10.89	13.46

Source: *Labour Force Survey Microdata.*

Those born in Scotland who work elsewhere in the UK have higher earnings than any of the other groups shown in Table 4.2. For example, the hourly earnings of those born in England who work in Scotland is more than £1 per hour less than Scots working outside Scotland. While this finding must be treated with caution because estimates of earnings from the Labour Force Survey are subject to considerable variation, and they may also be influenced by possible differences in age composition, this contrast is nevertheless worthy of further investigation. It is particularly relevant in the light of concerns about tax-induced migration, which may be affecting the Scottish Government's revenues.

Besides educational and employment related factors, networks and family ties are also important. The analysis of the 2011 census data shows that many migrants, especially those who move within the UK, are return migrants, i.e. move back to the UK's constituent country they were born. Return migrants account for 40% of migrants from Scotland to England and 25% from the rUK to Scotland (Figure 3.9). Interestingly, about one-fifth of international migrants both to England and Scotland were born in England or Scotland, respectively, indicating that return migrants also play an important role in international migration. Further analysis reveals that return migrants are more dominant among older than younger migrants between Scotland and the rUK. This is consistent with previous migration research showing that in their late fifties and sixties many people are likely to move back to their place of birth or to a residential context similar to their birthplace. Another interesting observation is that people born abroad also form a significant portion, one-fifth, of migrants between Scotland and rUK; and they move in both directions. The analysis therefore does not support the popular idea that international migrants mostly move from Scotland to England.

Figure 3.9 Migrants in England and Scotland by place of birth, 2011



Source: 2011 Census Microdata (5% sample).

The analysis of migrant profiles provides an overview of who moves from one country to another. However, it is equally important to investigate migrant selectivity in order to gain a better understanding of which type of people in a country of origin (e.g. Scotland) are more likely to move to a country of destination (e.g. rUK), and which are less likely. For example, migrants may be young people for two reasons: first, because of the young age structure of the origin country; second, because people move in their late teens or early twenties due to their studies and entry into labour market. We have fitted a series of regression models, which allow the study of the migration probabilities by a number of individuals' characteristics adjusted to other characteristics. This is an important step to determine the net effect of each variable. For example, single individuals are more likely to move only because they are likely to be younger than married individuals. To measure the net effect of marital status we thus need to adjust our models for individuals' age (and other potential cofounders).

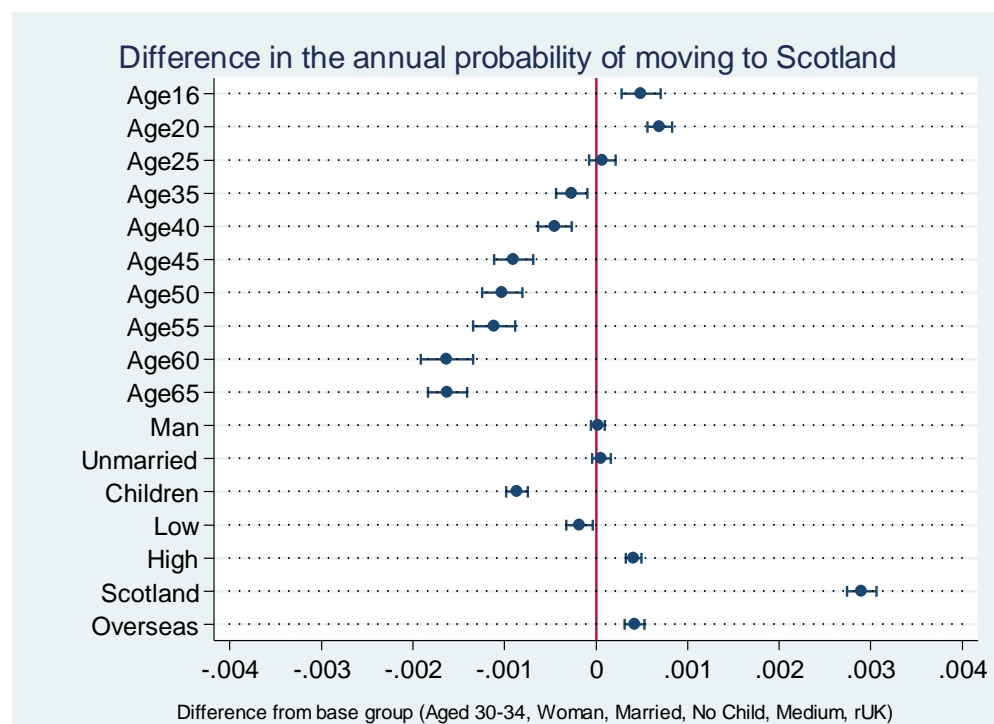
Figure 3.10 provides the results of a multivariate logistic regression model. Included in the model are variables that measure age, sex, marital status, the presence of dependent children in the family, education, and place of birth. The study of migrant selectivity using the 2011 census individual-level data largely supports what we have already learned from the analysis of migrant profiles. The likelihood of moving from England and Wales to Scotland is highest among individuals aged 20 to 24, but also

relatively high among those aged 16 to 19 and those in their late twenties and early thirties. As expected, the likelihood of moving significantly declines with age. Individuals with dependent children are less likely to move than those without children, which also corresponds to expectations. University graduates have a significantly higher probability of moving from England to Scotland. Finally, unsurprisingly, individuals born in Scotland have a significantly higher likelihood of moving to Scotland than those born in rUK or overseas: this is return migration at work.

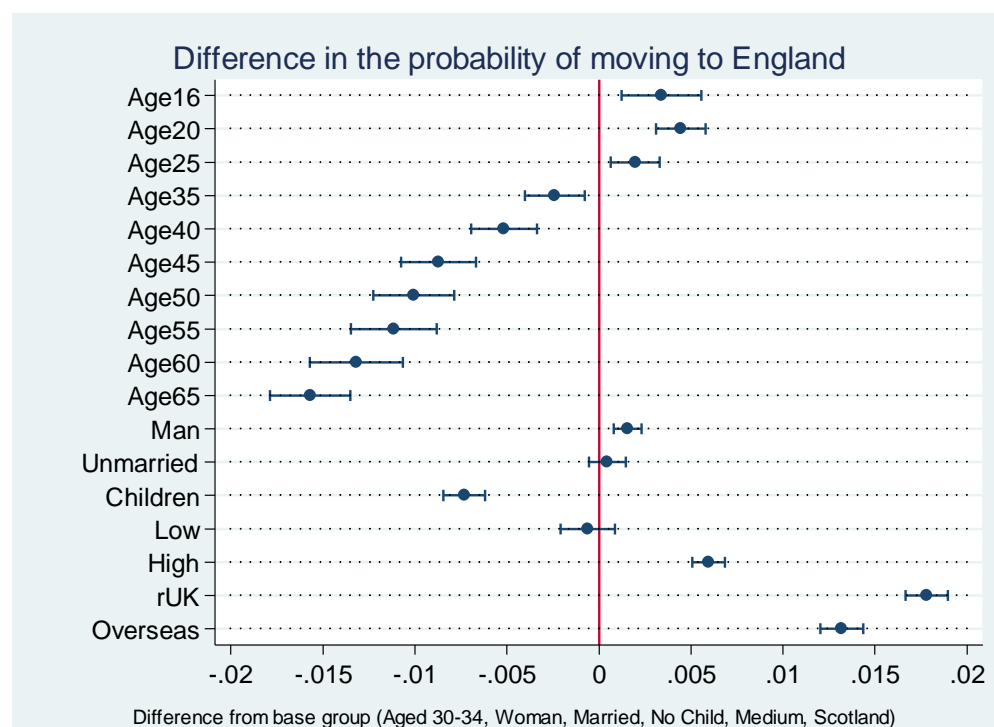
The results are similar for the migration propensities from Scotland to England and Wales (we have excluded Northern Ireland from our analysis). The likelihood of moving is greatest among people aged 20 to 24, but also among those in ages 16 to 19 and in their late twenties (Figure 3.10). Again, highly educated individuals are more likely to move from Scotland to England than those with low educational levels and couples without children have a higher probability of moving than those with dependent children. As expected, individuals who were born in England and Wales and overseas are more likely to move to England and Wales than people who were born in Scotland. Interestingly, men are also more likely to leave Scotland than women, although the differences are not large. We also analysed migrant selectivity using the 2001 census data (see Figure A3 in Appendix). The results are similar to those based on the 2011 census analysis suggesting that migration patterns between Scotland and rUK did not change significantly in the first decade of this century.

Figure 3.10 Probability of moving between England and Wales, and Scotland, 2010-11

**England and Wales to Scotland**



**Scotland to England and Wales**



Source: 2011 Census Microdata (5% sample).

The analysis of the Labour Force Survey from a recent period (2016-19) largely supports the results of the 2011 census data analysis; it also provides further information on migrant selectivity. Those holding degrees (the base case) are significantly more likely to leave Scotland or to come to Scotland than those with other educational qualifications. There are no significant differences in the probability of migrating among the other educational groups. Given the concentration of migration between ages 18 and 29, the initial move to university may have more bearing on whether individuals become migrants than current wage differentials between those with degrees and those with other qualifications or none.

Having dependent children does reduce mobility, as expected, due to concerns around educational disruption and increased economic costs. This effect is stronger for those coming to Scotland than for those who have left. Other significant results are that those born in the UK are significantly less likely to move, while migrants are much more likely to rent their accommodation than non-migrants, which also corresponds to expectations. Those born outside the UK seem to be more likely to come to Scotland, but less likely to leave. There are perhaps two main explanations of why migrants are more likely to rent their accommodation. The first is that migration is measured by a change of region over the last year. Some may still be searching for housing to purchase. The second is that, as we have seen, it is principally the young who migrate: the current generation of young people are less able to purchase housing than previous generations largely because wage growth has not kept pace with the increase in house prices.

Figure 3.11 Probability of Migration by Education and Other Characteristics

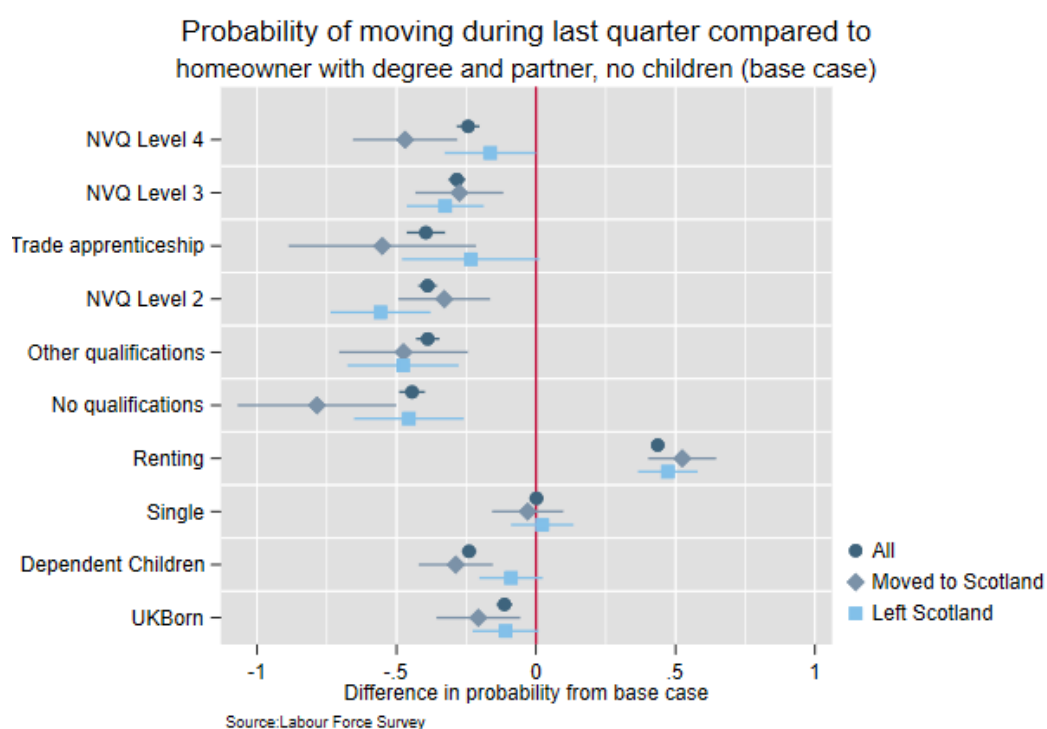
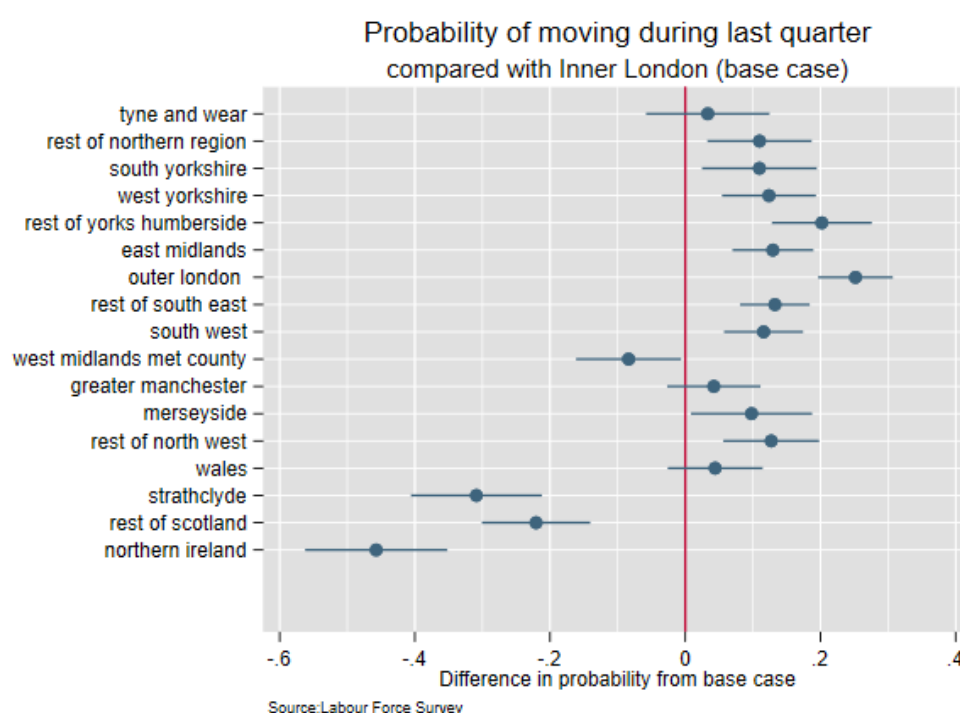




Figure 3.12 Probability of Migration by Region



Source: Own Calculations from Labour Force Survey Microdata

Figure 3.12 shows whether the propensity to migrate differs across the UK regions and nations after adjusting for other individual characteristics such as age, education, and so on. The base group for comparison purposes is Inner London. Among all those who move within the UK, and holding their other characteristics constant, the probability of a move among those living in Scotland (the Strathclyde area and the rest of Scotland) is significantly lower than in other parts of the UK, with the exception of Northern Ireland where the probability is even lower.

# 4

## **The Local Authority Perspective**

## 4. The Local Authority Perspective

As noted earlier in this report, challenges related to migration flows vary across Scotland. Whilst some areas, particularly on the West coast and in the Highlands and Islands, are challenged by shrinking populations, areas of the east coast and larger cities, especially Edinburgh and Aberdeen, have relatively buoyant populations and economies which can pull both labour and people away from surrounding areas. Local authorities in areas with decreasing populations are concerned both about demographic imbalance in their populations, in particular population ageing and growing dependency ratios, and about labour shortages in key sectors of the local economy. Those with large and growing populations are more concerned about potential strains on services and housing. In developing strategies and initiatives, either to attract new residents or to manage a growing local population, local authorities are motivated primarily by the need to ensure the sustainability of their communities, to protect local services and to provide adequate facilities to support the well-being of their residents.

Developing strategies to attract and retain a balanced population is challenging for local authorities, at least in part because of the number of areas of policy-making and implementation that such initiatives potentially cut across. Moreover, competence to make policy decisions and to allocate resource frequently lie at other levels of government: international migration policy is controlled by Westminster; housing, early years and education policies are made by the Scottish Government, but are often implemented locally and funded in large part from local authority budgets; initiatives to welcome new arrivals and support their social and cultural integration are most often developed and implemented at the local level.

In order to examine in more detail existing attempts to manage population movements at the local level, in preparing this report the EAG designed and distributed a questionnaire to all 32 Scottish local authorities, in September 2019. Eleven local authorities responded, and we have selected seven of the most detailed responses to develop as case studies below. In making our selection we have sought to incorporate insights from local authorities facing a variety of challenges and to include larger cities (Glasgow and Dundee), as well as authorities covering more rural and remote areas (Argyll and Bute, Perth and Kinross, Shetland).

Responses to the survey confirmed that Scottish Local Authorities have deep concerns about population issues in their areas. Whilst for a few, notably Edinburgh and the Lothians, concerns are focused on a large and growing population, for each of the remaining 9 local authorities responding to our survey labour shortages and demographic balance are the central focus. Many local authorities noted a combination of mutually reinforcing issues. For most west coast and predominantly rural areas, ageing of the local population is a key concern. As noted earlier in this

report, this is exacerbated by the loss of younger, and especially more highly educated local residents, who are attracted away to larger towns and cities by opportunities for study, for better paid employment and by the more attractive leisure and night-time economies in such places. Ageing of the local population implies increasing demand on local services, especially in the health and social care sectors. But at the same time, out-migration creates labour shortages in key sectors ranging from tourism and agriculture, to education, care and health.

Some local authorities have developed and implemented initiatives to attract and retain people. However, the policy levers at their disposal are limited, particularly with regard to international migration. Thus, local authority campaigns and strategies are most often developed with a view to encouraging in-migration from other areas of Scotland, and rUK, rather than targeting international migration more specifically. Some local authorities have introduced measures and made investments with a view to incentivising moves into their area, however most recognise that in-migration, whether international or from other areas of the UK and Scotland can only be one factor alongside others in tackling their population concerns.

Survey responses also suggested that local authorities consider measures to retain the resident working age population as just as important as, or even more important than, measures to attract new migrants. Economic regeneration, and investment in employment opportunities, are seen as key to encouraging younger people to stay in local areas, whether they are locally born or originally from elsewhere. Thus for Perth & Kinross, and Glasgow City Council, policy initiatives focus largely on soft levers to support migrant populations in place, to extend a welcome and to promote integration and facilitate longer-term settlement. Other local authorities have approached population issues much more as an integral strand of wider economic, investment and regeneration strategies.

Nonetheless, a number of local authorities note the important role of international migration, and especially the presence of EU nationals, in mitigating potentially more acute sectoral shortages in recent years, and express concern regarding the potential impacts of Brexit and changes to the UK's migration regime. As noted earlier in this report, if the UK immigration regime after the UK's departure from the EU restricts international migration as currently envisaged, local authorities will become more reliant on attracting people from elsewhere within the UK or Scotland. In this scenario, a greater and more sophisticated degree of co-ordination will be required to avoid unhelpful competition between local authorities, potentially resulting in a zero-sum game to attract migrants from other areas of Scotland.

## 4.1 Local Migration Policies: Case Studies

### Inverclyde

Inverclyde council is part of a Depopulation/Population Taskforce consisting of council Leaders and Chief Executives from other local authority areas including Argyll and Bute, East Ayrshire and North Ayrshire and working with CoSLA and Scottish Government to address issues of depopulation in the West Coast of Scotland. The area is faced with issues arising from a long-term decline in population, which has become more acute in recent years and is more severe, relative to other council areas. NRS projections suggest a further 3.8% decrease in the population by 2026, the second highest projected decrease in Scotland.<sup>4</sup> This is due to both negative natural change and negative net migration to the area, and is creating a downwards spiral of ageing of the local population, decreasing fertility rates, projected difficulties sustaining public services and undermining of the local economy which in turn discourages inward investment and in-migration.

Inverclyde faces a cycle of depopulation, further exacerbated by its positioning against national trends. The declining Inverclyde population, in tandem with a population increase Scotland-wide, means that Inverclyde's share of funding from the Scottish Government is reducing annually. This puts more pressure on vital services, which in turn can have an impact on the attractiveness of the area to current and potential new residents.

Inverclyde has been less successful in attracting international migrants compared to other areas of Scotland (although there has been a recent increase). Of those moving into the area in 2017-18, 71% were from other areas within Scotland, 24% from rest of the UK and only 5% from overseas. Similarly those leaving the area have tended to go to other parts of Scotland (75%) or elsewhere in the UK (16%), with only 8% moving overseas<sup>5</sup>. The local authority has conducted some research itself which has pointed to a demographically disproportionate number of young people and young families leaving the area. In its survey response the local authority states that it is assumed on the basis of anecdotal evidence that those leaving the area are more likely to be highly skilled/educated.

Amongst the local authorities which responded to our survey, Inverclyde stood out as having taken a particularly proactive stance with regard to tackling population decline, viewing repopulation as an urgent strategic priority. In developing its strategy the local authority has commissioned research on locally-based population strategies looking at initiatives and projects elsewhere in the UK. The local authority

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<sup>4</sup> [https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/files/statistics/council-area-data-sheets/inverclyde-council-profile.html#population\\_projections](https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/files/statistics/council-area-data-sheets/inverclyde-council-profile.html#population_projections)

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/statistics-and-data/statistics/statistics-by-theme/migration/migration-statistics/migration-flows/total-migration-to-or-from-scotland>

reported that it has invested £1 million in initiatives over the period April 2014 – May 2015 to encourage people to move to and settle in Inverclyde, as part of an ‘Inverclyde Living’ campaign. In 2018/2019, the Inverclyde Alliance approved a new Population Action Plan, containing a range of measures aimed at promoting repopulation locally and funded via a £500,000 council investment.

The ‘Inverclyde Living’ campaign focused on a combination of soft levers, to advertise and promote Inverclyde as an attractive area, and specific financial incentives targeting business start-ups, young graduates, and homeowners. The campaign was launched, with the creation of a website and branding for the general promotion of Inverclyde throughout the wider central belt. There were additional grants made available for new start-up businesses coming into the area, as well as Graduate Grants to encourage local employers to employ young graduates from outside the area. For individuals, the campaign promoted and provided information about the area, and financial incentives were offered. Families, couples or individuals interested in moving to Inverclyde were offered relocation assistance, including tours of local amenities and services (e.g. schools, leisure facilities). Financial incentives were made up of two elements: (1) help with relocation costs where these were not covered by an employer and (2) a two-year reduction in council tax, in a bid to encourage not only relocation but longer-term stays. The initiative was thus targeted at homeowners rather than those entering the rental market. The local authority reported that this focus was a way of encouraging moves by those more likely to ‘put down roots’.

The initiative, which ran between April 2014 and May 2015, was taken up by 45 home buyers, including 21 couples and 14 families, and as such was deemed successful in tackling some of the most acute depopulation issues at the time. Employment was not part of the eligibility criteria and only 64% of those taking up the offer were in employment with most of the remainder being of retirement age. The scheme was also most successful in attracting in-migration from nearby Scottish local authorities, with only 31% coming from further afield (15% from England; 7% from Ireland, 9% other). Retention rates are high, and follow-up research by the Council explained this as a result of people having been motivated more by their choice of new house, to be nearer to family, or to return the area after finishing their career elsewhere, than by financial incentives per se. This initiative has now ended although the overarching promotional message (that Inverclyde is a good place to live) is still ongoing via marketing activity.

The more recent Inverclyde Population Action Plan 2018/19 reflects the top priority in the area’s Local Outcomes Improvement Plan, namely that, “Inverclyde’s population will be stable and sustainable with an appropriate balance of socio - economic groups that is conducive to local economic prosperity and longer-term population

growth”<sup>6</sup>. The plan includes a range of measures to improve marketing and communication, to grow the housing market, achieve growth in the private sector, to promote Inverclyde both to those who wish to live there and work elsewhere and to those who wish to live and work locally, to improve infrastructure, particularly transport links, and to brand Inverclyde as a centre for culture and leisure. Framed as the basis of a longer and wider economic strategy, the plan is very much focused on attracting new residents from other (neighbouring) areas of Scotland and stemming the flow of young people to such areas. It makes no mention of international migration as part of the strategy.

These initiatives, highlighted in the local authority’s response to our survey, illustrate well the challenges faced by local authorities in developing effective interventions. Both schemes have sought to encourage long-term moves of people into the area and highlight linkages between a generalised need for population and wider economic development issues. They are relatively blunt tools, however, which are not designed to meet particular sectoral shortages or to match skills to local employment needs. They are not concerned with the provenance of new residents, and as a result are most effective in supporting moves from neighbouring Scottish local authority areas, many of which might have happened anyway. Local authorities with similar population needs then potentially end up competing with each other for residents.

### Argyll & Bute

Argyll and Bute faces many similar issues to Inverclyde, and is also part of the Depopulation/Population Taskforce. Like Inverclyde, Argyll and Bute local authority faces pressing population issues in relation to both sectoral shortages and population ageing and decline. Negative natural population change is compounded by accelerated ageing as young people leave in higher numbers, whilst the area remains a popular retirement destination for people from more urban areas of Scotland and rUK. In the current period the local authority reports significant skills gaps and unfilled vacancies in areas such as health and social care, where demand is increasing as the population changes. In January 2019 the local authority commissioned a Tourism and Food and Drink Industries Workforce Survey, which identified ‘specific skills shortages in skilled technical and skilled operational positions across these key growth sectors for the area’.<sup>7</sup>

The local authority has commissioned research to explore the ways in which population change is impacting on the workforce and to identify key challenges in this regard. In 2019 Argyll and Bute local authority, in partnership with Skills

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/council-and-government/community-planning-partnership/inverclyde-outcome-improvement-plan>

<sup>7</sup> ‘Tourism and Food and Drink Industries Workforce Survey: Final Report’ (24 January 2019), ibp Strategy and Research with Context Economic and Social Research



Development Scotland, commissioned work to pull together a Cross-sectoral and Occupational Workforce Plan with input from other key partners and industry to focus on workforce challenges now and how these may change, grow or subside in the future. Once finalised, this piece of work should provide an updated position with regard to the findings of the 'Compelling Argyll and Bute' report in 2015.<sup>8</sup> Insights from commissioned research were fed into local authority strategies and initiatives to tackle population issues. The local authority views population issues as embedded within a wider economic and workforce strategy, and as linked to concerns around skills gaps and sustainable employment, as well as a need for more key worker housing, and higher paying jobs. The overall strategic vision of Argyll and Bute Community Improvement Plan is that "economic success is built on a growing population".

The Rural Resettlement Fund (2016-18) was instituted to encourage people and businesses to relocate to the area.<sup>9</sup> Similar to the Inverclyde Living campaign, this bespoke local fund offered financial assistance with relocation costs to individuals (either employed or self-employed) and to existing businesses. Grants of £5-10k included an incentive to stay longer-term as 25% of the sum awarded was retained by the council until people had lived in Argyll and Bute for over a year. The scheme brought 196 new residents to the area, including 55 children, mainly from other parts of Scotland and from England. At around the same time the Council agreed to welcome 15 Syrian families as part of the resettlement scheme and framed this also as a response to concerns about ongoing population decline. These efforts notwithstanding, the area saw a new drop in population in the year to June 2018.<sup>10</sup>

The local authority has now closed the Rural Resettlement Fund scheme using any remaining funds of the ring-fenced £500k as match funding for a new Rural Growth Deal proposal to Scottish and UK governments for transformational investment in the area. In its 2019-2023 Economic strategy, the local authority reiterated its commitment to building "new schools, building hundreds of new affordable homes, supporting the growth of businesses, attracting significant external capital funding to improve critical infrastructure, improving peoples' skills for work, investing in roads, supporting a host of community regeneration projects, providing grants to help people to move to Argyll and improving built environment through area regeneration initiatives."<sup>11</sup>

The decision to close the Rural Resettlement Fund in 2019 following a review of the scheme's outcomes, as well as closer collaboration with other local authorities and

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<sup>8</sup> <https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/compelling-argyll-and-bute>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/news/2017/aug/over-%C2%A3140000-awarded-new-residents-rural-resettlement-fund>  
<https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/r/f>

<sup>10</sup> <https://thelochsidepress.com/2019/06/25/population-falls-again-in-argyll-and-bute/>

<sup>11</sup> [https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/sites/default/files/economic\\_strategy\\_0.pdf](https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/sites/default/files/economic_strategy_0.pdf)



Scottish government through the Depopulation/Population Taskforce, appear to signal an assessment, that population issues cannot be tackled at the local level alone. Policies addressing the strategic importance of the rural economy are required alongside migration initiatives and incentives. As such, the overarching goal under the local authority's rural growth deal skills proposals is growth in the working age population coupled with sustainable employment opportunities. This example highlights the close ties between population issues and wider economic concerns and a need for greater co-ordination and joined-up policy thinking at national as well as local level is highlighted.

## Perth & Kinross

Population challenges for Perth and Kinross are somewhat different to the previous two case studies. Labour and skills shortages in particular economic sectors are the central issue rather than wider issues of population ageing and decline, which dominate on the West Coast. International migration, most significantly (but not only) from the EU has played a clearer role in mitigating these shortages in the recent past, and the council has more specific concerns regarding the potential impacts of the end of free movement and introduction of the new immigration regime, which is seen as a potential threat to both labour supply and business continuity. The council reports a heavy reliance on migrant workers (including resident EU workers) in key sectors of the local economy. The most affected sectors are agriculture, food and drink, hospitality, and care.

Unlike the other local authorities discussed above, Perth and Kinross council has been closely monitoring the potential impacts of Brexit on international migration to and from the area. The Council's most recent Economic Journal Briefing reports a 12% decline in overall international migration to the area between March 2018 and March 2019 and a 14.4% drop in migration to the area from EU countries.<sup>12</sup> The latter is particularly significant in terms of seasonal migration to the agricultural sector. The local authority monitors national insurance number (NINO) registrations to adult overseas individuals as a proxy for short-term international migration and has found 65.7% of the current cohort are Romanian, Bulgarian or Polish. On the other hand, the local authority notes that the care sector in particular has recruited from both the EU and beyond and that this migration has been instrumental in addressing the issues associated with an ageing population. Overall, net migration to the area (including international migration and moves within Scotland/rUK) has fallen from 1,260 per annum in 2014-15, to 660 per annum in 2017-18<sup>13</sup>. Since the decline has been most marked in the period 2016-18 it is likely also to reflect the fall in international migration noted above. However, the largely rural composition of the

<sup>12</sup> [https://www.pkc.gov.uk/media/44739/Perth-Kinross-Economic-Journal-Migration-since-the-Brexit-vote-Summer-2019-update/pdf/EcJ\\_Migration\\_Briefing\\_Summer\\_2019.pdf?m=637026792281700000](https://www.pkc.gov.uk/media/44739/Perth-Kinross-Economic-Journal-Migration-since-the-Brexit-vote-Summer-2019-update/pdf/EcJ_Migration_Briefing_Summer_2019.pdf?m=637026792281700000)

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/statistics-and-data/statistics/statistics-by-theme/migration/migration-statistics/migration-flows/total-migration-to-or-from-scotland>

area also creates challenges with regard to retention of skills and of the younger working age population. Larger university cities and population centres nearby offer more in terms of education, jobs, housing and lifestyle opportunities, attracting younger residents in particular to move away.

Against this background, the Council took part in the COSLA Migration Matters Scotland (MMS) Project, a 19-month pilot scheme, co-financed by the European Fund for the Integration of Third Country Nationals. This included the development of a searchable database of Scotland-focused resources on migration, and studies on the experiences of and challenges facing migrant groups in Scotland covering the themes of housing, employment, health and leisure, social connections, and education. Findings from the project provided an opportunity to gain insight into views on service provision from both local authority and migrant perspectives. By highlighting areas of success and good practice and potential future development, it was hoped that the pilot work would serve as a platform for the ongoing, positive development of diverse communities across Scotland.

Perth and Kinross Council Equalities Team has undertaken a number of initiatives to ensure new migrant communities are made to feel safe and welcome, in partnership with third sector colleagues. These have included booklets with key information translated into other languages where necessary, and information roadshows and events in particular geographic areas or with local employers. More recently Perth and Kinross Council has been actively working with partner organisations and employers to promote the EU Settlement Scheme, and provides regularly updated information and advice for EU citizens and local businesses.<sup>14</sup>

## Shetland

Shetland exemplifies the challenges faced in very remote areas of Scotland, even despite ongoing local initiatives. Aside from the population issues it shares with other regions mentioned in this report, such as an ageing population, the cost of living is 20-60% higher than the UK average, which (in tandem with its remoteness) may make it less attractive to both skilled and unskilled workers open to relocating. A high rate of young people leaving the islands means that the demographic balance is shifting towards an older population at a faster rate than in the rest of Scotland, and in December 2018 the Director of Development Services at Shetland Council noted that the region needed to attract 1,500 new young people in the following decade merely to balance the demographic profile with the Scottish average.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> <https://www.pkc.gov.uk/article/20767/Advice-on-the-UK-leaving-the-European-Union>

<sup>15</sup> <https://hopsotland.files.wordpress.com/2018/12/neil-grant-shetland-islands-council-10-year-plan.pdf>

After a period of population increase in the early 1990s, followed by a decline in the period 1996-2001, a gradual increase in the period 2001-2011, and stability from 2011-2016, Shetland began to see population decline again in 2016, especially in the working-age population<sup>16</sup>. The local authority reported in response to our survey that the needs of employers are a key concern, and that local businesses and other employers are struggling to fill positions given the region's low level of unemployment. The 2017 Shetland Employment Survey found that 20% of respondents had failed to fill vacancies. Both highly-skilled, professional jobs and more manual or clerical positions are affected: attracting key workers for the NHS is a perennial problem, but sectors such as construction and manufacturing also face acute shortages. Some working age people are employed in more than one job to meet the constant demand for workers. Shetland Council notes that there has been some success with targeted recruitment projects to address skills gaps. However, recent media coverage suggests that sectors such as education are facing increasing problems with recruitment, and an ageing workforce is also causing long-term staffing issues for NHS Shetland.<sup>17</sup>

A dependence on migrant labour is particularly pronounced in the fishing industry, which dominates the local economy: for example, 20% of employees at the largest salmon farmer in the islands are EU nationals.<sup>18</sup> Seasonal jobs, which can double the workforce at busy times, have also chiefly been taken up by EU workers over the past two decades. The percentage of people born in EU countries living on the islands has risen from 0.8% in 2001, to 2.3% in recent years.<sup>19</sup> The local authority sees a link between seasonal employment opportunities and longer-term settlement as a way of tackling more generalised issues of population decline and ageing, and is keen to continue to attract foreign workers both to work seasonally and to settle longer-term on the islands. In response to our survey the local authority stated that their goal is to ensure that current EU residents in Shetland be granted settled status.

Shetland's Economic Development Strategy 2018-22 notes that "migration is essential for continued economic development and growing [the] working age population is a central aim of the Shetland Partnership".<sup>20</sup> It highlights the

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<sup>16</sup> <https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/files/statistics/council-area-data-sheets/shetland-islands-council-profile.html>

<sup>17</sup> Cope, C. 'Shetland Islands council fails for the 'first time in a long time' to recruit supply teacher'. *Press and Journal* (08.05.19) <https://www.pressandjournal.co.uk/fp/news/1742834/shetland-islands-council-fails-for-the-first-time-in-a-long-time-to-recruit-supply-teacher/>  
NHS Shetland Workforce Plan Update (April 2019) <https://www.shb.scot.nhs.uk/board/planning/wfp-20182019-update.pdf>

<sup>18</sup> Culture, Tourism, Europe and External Relations Committee. Inquiry-Immigration. Written submission from Shetland Council (2017)

<sup>19</sup> Culture, Tourism, Europe and External Relations Committee. Inquiry-Immigration. Written submission from Shetland Council (2017)

<sup>20</sup> [https://www.shetland.gov.uk/economic\\_development/documents/EconomicDevelopmentDraftStrategy2018-2022.pdf](https://www.shetland.gov.uk/economic_development/documents/EconomicDevelopmentDraftStrategy2018-2022.pdf)

significance of migration to maintaining Shetland's society and economy. The local authority notes the marked variation in migration rates within Scotland and has expressed concerns that migration policy goals, whether determined by Holyrood or Westminster, should reflect the specific needs of local areas. In developing policy responses, the local authority has been keen to learn from international experience and would welcome greater decentralisation of (certain aspects of) migration policy to the Scottish or indeed the local authority level. The approach taken by the Åland Islands of Finland, a semi-autonomous region, is seen as having particular resonance for Shetland. This region offers EU-supported regional citizenship to those who meet certain criteria aimed at preserving the area's Swedish language and customs, and debate is ongoing about removing a requirement for Finnish citizenship to be held or acquired before one may be a citizen of the Åland Islands. A main point of resonance seems to be the high level of migration to the area, particularly from the Baltic states and other former state socialist countries, partly as a result of the strong local economy. The Åland Islands have implemented their own Integration Act (2013) and promote immigration and return of students via measures such as campaigns, paid internships and international jobs fairs.<sup>21</sup>

In seeking to tackle its population concerns, the local authority has launched a number of policy initiatives and has established a working group on retention which reports to the Community Planning Partnership. The key measure of this group thus far has been 'Promote Shetland',<sup>22</sup> a destination marketing service which aims to build a strong place brand and positive reputation via highlighting cultural events, the area's wildlife and nature, and what life is like for Shetlanders. Shetland Council note that it is difficult to measure the impact of this policy, as it has run for only two years so far. The local community planning partnership's 2018-28 Ten Year Plan<sup>23</sup> includes attracting and retaining more people as a key priority for the achievement of sustainable economic growth. However, specific proposed measures are mainly limited to promoting the region as an attractive place to live, work, study and invest. The local authority recognises future challenges in relation to gaining the "right mix" of jobs, housing, transport and access to childcare and support networks to meet family needs. Like other local authorities, Shetland's initiatives, given the current available policy levers and levels of co-ordination, focus on soft levers and are limited in reach, scope and effectiveness. The council sees a clear link between migration and wider issues of economic growth and investment.

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<sup>21</sup> [http://www.parliament.scot/S5\\_European/General%20Documents/CTEER\\_Dr\\_Hepburn\\_report\\_2017.04.24.pdf](http://www.parliament.scot/S5_European/General%20Documents/CTEER_Dr_Hepburn_report_2017.04.24.pdf)

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.shetland.org/60n/authors/promote-shetland>  
[https://twitter.com/PromoteShetland?ref\\_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwgr%5Eauthor](https://twitter.com/PromoteShetland?ref_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwgr%5Eauthor)

<sup>23</sup> <https://www.shetland.gov.uk/communityplanning/documents/180801SPPforWebFINAL.pdf>

## Midlothian

In contrast to the local authorities above, policy in Midlothian focuses on ensuring sufficient service provision for an expected high increase in population over the next six years. Furthermore, an ageing population is of less concern in this local authority, as there is projected to be a growth in the 0-15 and 30-59 age groups. This has created different issues around population, chiefly centring on increasing demand for housing and services.

Population growth in Midlothian is linked above all to the growth in the Edinburgh travel to work area, which in turn is seen as resulting from the South East Scotland Development Plan's stress on housing growth in recent years. The region has thus benefited from being part of strategic development planning for Edinburgh City and the surrounding region.<sup>24</sup> The local authority is also seeking to maximise the impact of four new railway stations on the Borders Railway, including building a new town at Shawfair.<sup>25</sup>

However, such rapid population growth brings its own challenges. While the Scottish Government has directed more funds to meet the projected demand for housing in Midlothian and other parts of the South East Scotland region, the local authority draws attention to a social housing waiting list of over 4,000 applicants. Recent policy has focused on improving the quality of social housing available, and the Council's Strategic Housing Investment Plan for 2019/20 to 2023/24 states that it is committed to building 1,000 new council houses by March 2022, and requires 25% of any new private development to be affordable housing.

In addition to housing provision, the most recent Single Midlothian Plans (2018/19 and 2019/20)<sup>26</sup> consider other population concerns such as short-term healthcare, care provision, community safety, regional quality of life, and opportunity for citizens of Midlothian. Issues such as early years provision (the Learning Estate strategy aims to address the growing demand for nurseries and schools) and community safety are also highlighted in these documents. In its response to the EAG survey, the local authority noted how challenging it was to integrate new and settled communities and provide basic services under financial strain, in a national environment of local authority austerity. This may become a significant issue in other local authorities as competing priorities put pressure on population strategy spending.

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<sup>24</sup> This also includes the southern half of Fife, East Lothian, West Lothian and the Scottish Borders.

<sup>25</sup> <https://www.shawfair.co.uk>

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[https://www.midlothian.gov.uk/info/200284/your\\_community/214/community\\_planning\\_in\\_midlothian/2](https://www.midlothian.gov.uk/info/200284/your_community/214/community_planning_in_midlothian/2)

## Dundee

Dundee City's population is affected by both national population trends – such as a projected growth in the 65+ age categories – and on a more local level by the fact that it is a university town with a significant student population. Compared to the Scottish average, Dundee has a larger percentage of people in the 18-30 and 85+ age brackets. Although its population is stable, NRS projections for 2016-2026 indicate a decrease in the age groups 16-24 and 45-65, as well as increases in the age groups 0-15, 25-44 and 65+<sup>27</sup>. This issue may have implications for future dependency ratios, however it is not currently emphasised in the city plan.<sup>28</sup>

The council highlights encouraging sustainable businesses in the city via targeted investment as the chief policy in relation to their population strategy. Other policies related to this have been urban regeneration, house building and overall development of the city in recent years. There is a local emphasis on the city centre as a desirable place to live, and recent population increases have been greeted positively and seen as a result of general investment.<sup>29</sup>

Like other areas of Scotland, Dundee City is addressing challenges related to an ageing population, chiefly via health and social care and local community plans. The local authority response to the EAG survey makes mention of increased customer expectations and complex needs which require more personalised approaches. These in turn drive an increased demand for labour in the care sector.

Net migration to Dundee has fluctuated in recent years. Net migration to the city has been positive for all but one (2013-14) of the last 10 years on record. Net international migration has been positive throughout although it has also fluctuated from a high of 1580 in 2010-11, to a more modest 570 in 2017-18. However, migration between Dundee and other areas of Scotland has been consistently negative over the period 2008-2018. Dundee City Council also compares the figure of graduate retention of 26% in Dundee unfavourably to that of 46% in Glasgow City. The local authority and its community planning partners prioritise retaining and attracting “talent” through inward investment and the growth of key sectors (i.e. knowledge industries such as life sciences and digital). Their survey response states that they are currently prioritising “young and economically active people [who can] provide a flexible supply of labour”.

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<sup>27</sup> <https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/files/statistics/council-area-data-sheets/dundee-city-council-profile.html>

<sup>28</sup> <https://www.dundee.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/cityplanannrep.pdf>

<sup>29</sup> <https://www.eveningtelegraph.co.uk/fp/huge-increase-in-dundee-city-centre-population/>



## Glasgow

Glasgow City Council was the only local authority amongst those which responded to the EAG survey to foreground international migration as part of an ongoing population strategy. Projected population growth is slow and the city centre population is low compared to other UK/EU cities.<sup>30</sup> Glasgow's Economic Strategy 2016-2021 identifies population increase as a key challenge and pre-requisite for achieving inclusive economic growth. The Strategy highlights a number of sub-issues related to international migration, such as the role of post-study work visas, and the importance of lobbying for Glasgow's interests with the Scottish and UK Governments (particularly with regard to 'passporting' for financial services, or to freedom of movement). The integration of migrants and newcomers is a key priority for the Glasgow Inclusive Cities scheme – Phase 2,<sup>31</sup> and migration is viewed as feeding into inclusive growth and skills shortages.

The Inclusive Cities Officers group, led by the Economic Development division at Glasgow City Council, is tasked with identifying the main challenges for the city in relation to population. An initial list of challenges and issues which merit further exploration includes:

- Understanding the implications of an ageing population in terms of available labour supply, both for Glasgow and surrounding local authorities (e.g. in terms of commuter flows);
- Identifying the industrial sectors that have a large presence of overseas migrants;
- Assessing the relative volumes of overseas migrants in Glasgow that are in employment, and overseas migrants in Glasgow for reasons of higher education;
- Analysing how the reduction in the number of births in Glasgow has been offset by patterns of net migration.

In terms of ongoing strategy and policies, the city's Economic Strategy highlights a desire to work with the Scottish and UK Governments through the Brexit/post-Brexit period to ensure that visa policies enable the retention of "talent" and grow the regional economy<sup>32</sup>. A new International Strategy is being developed, with attendant research into how Glasgow can attract more international communities and celebrate local international communities, as well as how Glasgow can be best promoted as a diverse business location.

Glasgow City Council is engaging with and supporting several schemes to welcome and support the longer-term settlement of migrants and refugees and aiming to

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<sup>30</sup> Glasgow Economic Strategy 2016-21, p. 20

<https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=36137&p=0>

<sup>31</sup> <https://www.compas.ox.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/Inclusive-Cities-briefing-note-Dec-17.pdf>

<sup>32</sup> Glasgow Economic Strategy 2016-21, p. 23

<https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=36137&p=0>

contribute more generally to community integration. For example, the local authority's BME Democratic Engagement Paper mentions schemes such as 'Sharing Lives, Sharing Languages'; a 'Communities Refugee Advisory Group'; and 'Speak Out About Racism'.

Glasgow's rather unique positioning as a larger, university city, with a significant history of labour migration from different parts of the world and over 20 years' experience of refugee settlement, sets it apart from the other local authorities discussed above. The city has a clear view of migration as integral to its economic development strategy, yet, in some ways shares similar dilemmas to other local authorities in needing clearer policy frameworks for collaborating with Scottish and UK governments to meet its migration and population goals as a city. At the local level, initiatives focus on welcoming and celebrating diversity and ensuring equalities standards are met.



# 5

## Conclusions

## 5. Conclusions

Since the turn-of-the-century, more people have chosen to come to Scotland than to leave. This is true both for emigrants from rUK as well as the rest of the world. This recent pattern of net in-migration reverses a period of net outflows from Scotland during the previous 50 years. While part of this trend may be explained by more restrictive immigration policies in traditional destinations for Scots, this does not explain patterns of movement between Scotland and rUK. It would be useful to develop a better understanding of the causes of intra-UK migration, and particularly the factors that attract rUK migrants to Scotland, for example through conducting a survey specifically directed at migrants.

Most residential moves in Scotland occur over short distances. Longer distance moves which are likely to include changed labour market and social circumstances, as well as of residence, are much less common. Both types of move are registered as migration if a local authority boundary is crossed. Policies relating to internal migration should be aware of this distinction.

Policies relating to shorter distance residential moves interact with commuting and therefore with transport infrastructure. It is important that the Scottish Government has a clearer understanding of the opportunities and constraints associated with this interaction, so that it can plan infrastructural investments with a view to promoting mobility.

Both long-distance and short distance migration interact with the housing market. We have found that those migrating 1-year or less are much more likely to rent their accommodation. The rental market is important for providing opportunities for migration, but lack of access to owner occupation may reduce the probability of longer-term migration.

Migration is heavily concentrated among the young. The probability of movement falls steeply with age. The better educated are also much more likely to migrate. In combination, these effects are resulting in a very significant move of young people to Scotland's major cities, which offer a wide range of higher education opportunities. For these destinations, the influx of young people enhances economic dynamism. Also, because public service usage by young people is largely focused on education, their demand for other public services, particularly health, is relatively low. In contrast, those "left behind" areas have a much older population, higher demand for public services and the lack of well-qualified young people is a constraint on growth.

This raises a fundamental question about Scotland's future economic and social development. It concerns the allocation of public resources between, on the one hand, Scotland's large cities which seem the likely engines of future economic growth and, on the other, the wide hinterland where demographic forces and the

present configuration of higher education institutions is leading to an ageing population increasingly dependent on public service support. Equity considerations suggest that public service support should be equally accessible, regardless of location. Yet this may become a more difficult aspiration to realise with the continuing ageing of the hinterland population.

Local authorities find it difficult to implement successful policies to attract migrants either from within the UK or overseas. This is partly because they lack the policy levers that might improve their outcomes. Improved co-ordination and collaboration both between local authorities, as well as with national governments, is needed in order for local policy initiatives to be more effective and to avoid unhelpful competition between local authorities for the same residents. A careful review is needed of the range of policy levers required to ensure the right levels of migration to and between different areas of Scotland and the mechanisms by which such migration would lead to successful experiences of stay (whether short-term or of longer duration) for both host communities and migrants themselves.

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## APPENDIX A: The Labour Force Survey

Compared with the National Health Service Central Register (NHSCR), greater detail on those who move between Scotland and rUK is available from the Labour Force Survey. This dataset is published by the Office for National Statistics and is used to derive the regularly published labour market aggregates such as the level of employment and the unemployment rate. A wide range of data is collected from respondents such as the qualifications, industry and occupation (if employed) and also, particularly relevant for this study, whether they have recently moved.

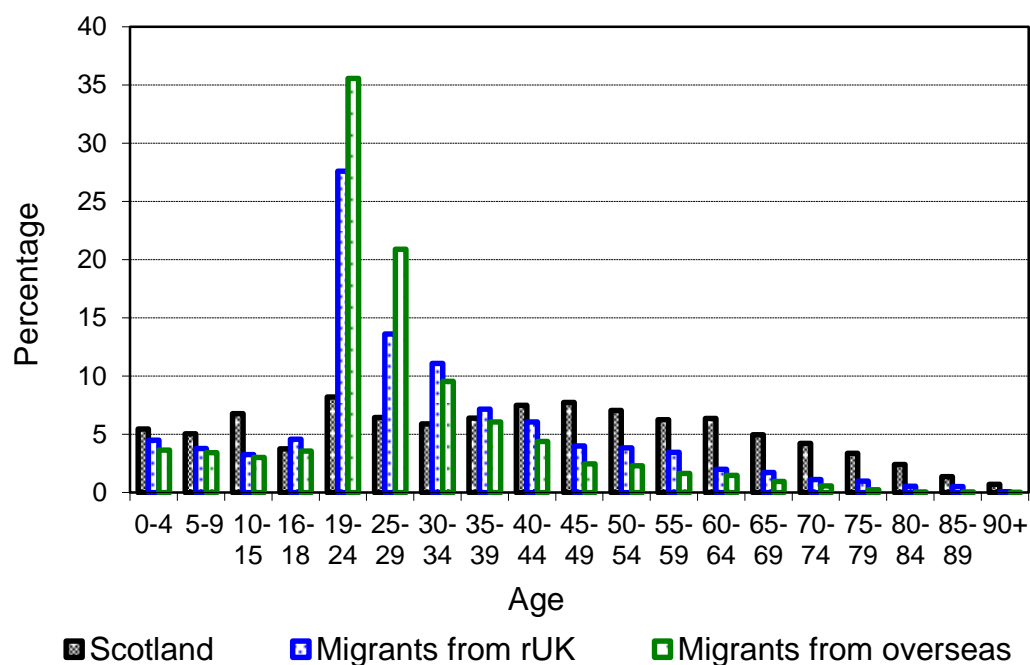
Labour Force Survey data is collected continuously from adults in households and made available to researchers each quarter. The data that are used in this exercise cover the period 2007 Q1 to 2019 Q2. They comprise 933,000 individual cases, 79,000 of which were resident in Scotland at the time of the survey. The question relating to migration that each adult is asked is whether they are resident in the same region as they were 12 months previously. For this question, the UK is subdivided into 19 regions, two of which are in Scotland, namely “Strathclyde” and “Rest of Scotland”.

For detailed information on the study see: [Labour Force survey user guidance](#)

## Visualisations

### 2011 Census Data: Scotland

Figure A1. Age structure of Scotland's population by migrant status in 2011.



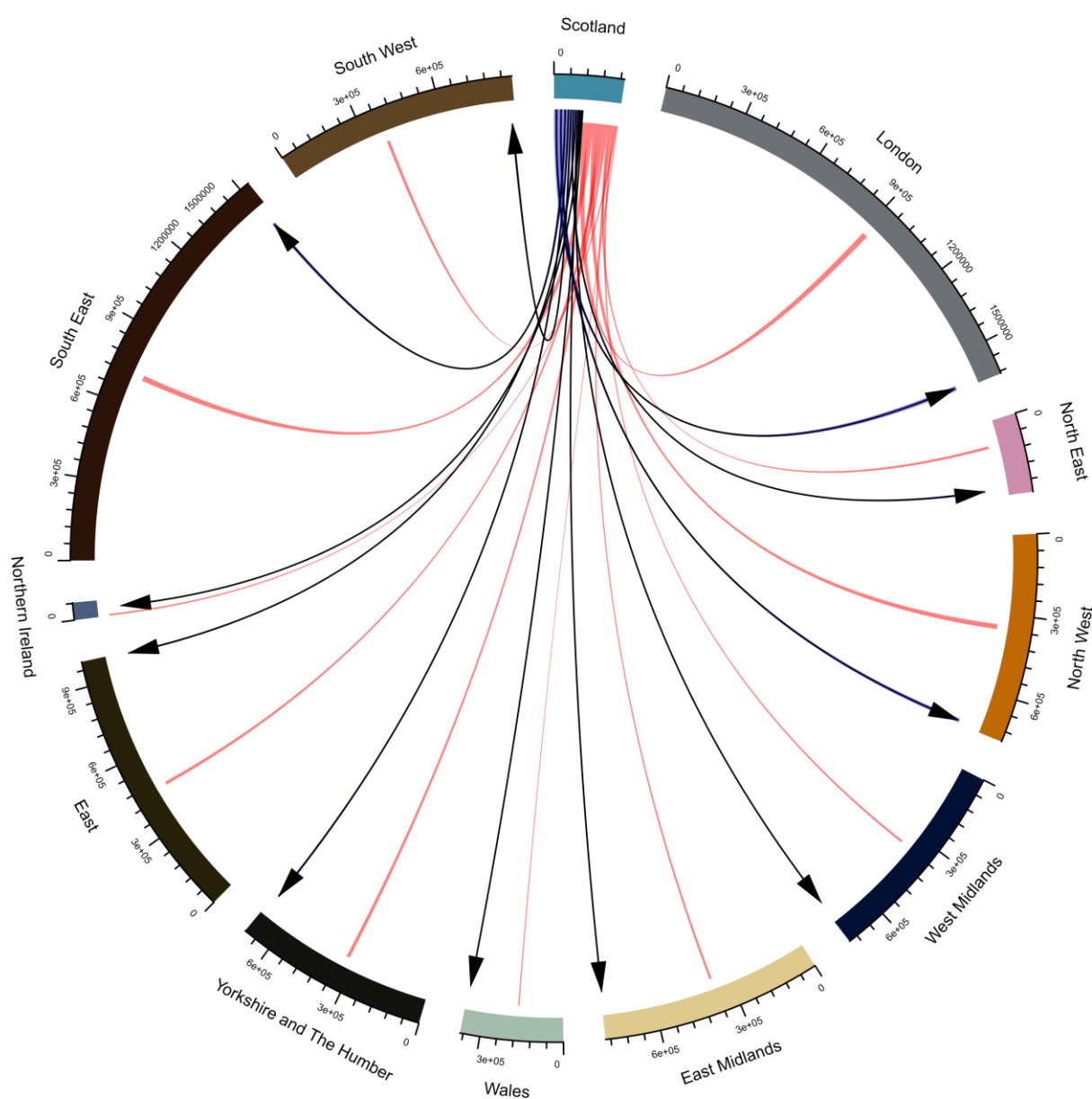
Data: 5% sample

Scotland, N= 261,816

Migrants from rUK, N=2,138

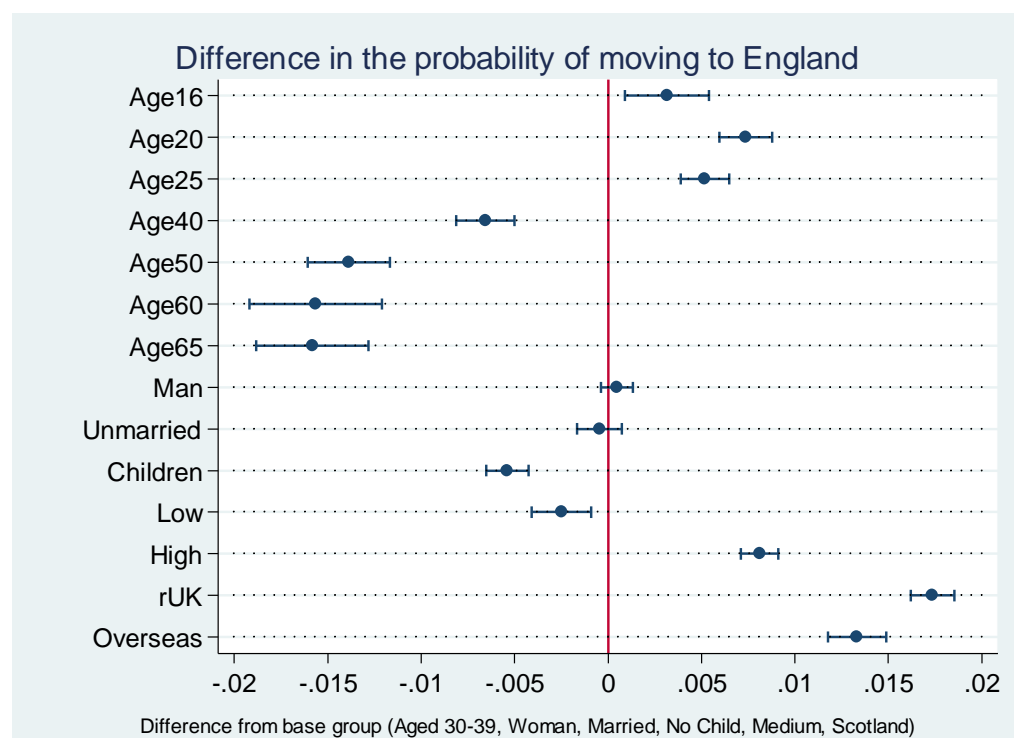
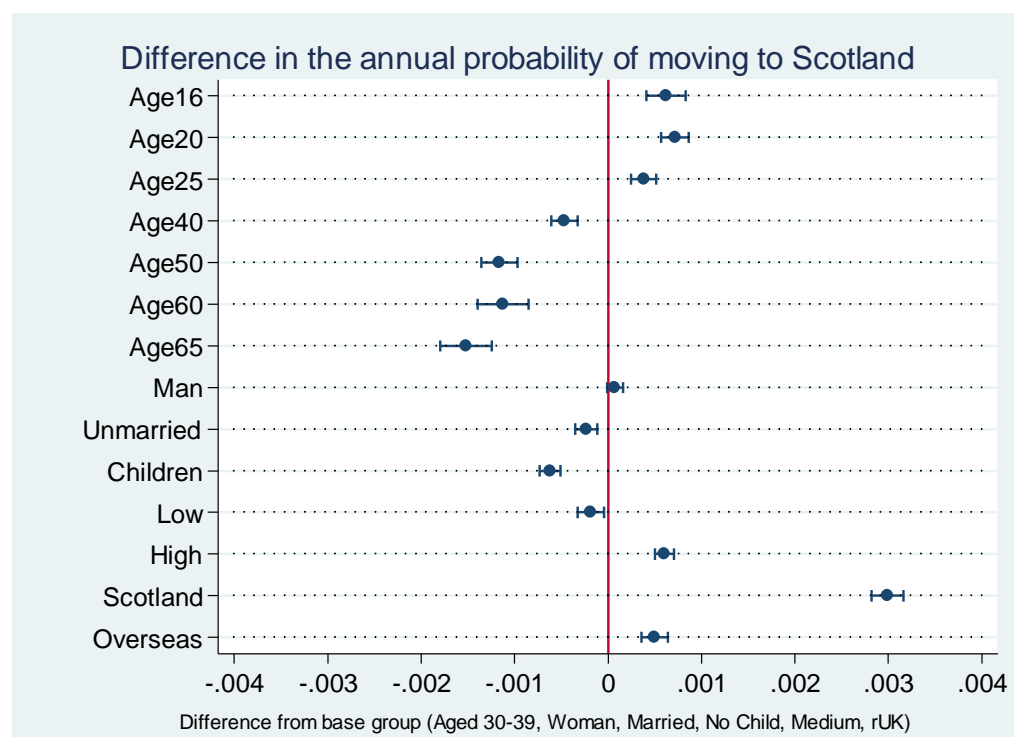
Migrants from overseas, N=3,118

Figure A2. Intra-UK migrant flows 2015-17





**Figure A3. Probability of moving between England and Wales, and Scotland, 2000-01**



Source: The 2001 Census Microdata (a 5% sample, individuals aged 16-74).

## APPENDIX B: The Local Authority Survey Questionnaire



University  
of Glasgow

College of Social  
Sciences

### Invitation to participate in Scottish Government Expert Advisory Group on Migration and Population survey

Project Title: Immigration as a tool to offset demographic pressures: lessons from home and abroad

Researcher Details: Professor Rebecca Kay, University of Glasgow.  
[Rebecca.Kay@glasgow.ac.uk](mailto:Rebecca.Kay@glasgow.ac.uk). Tel: 0141 330 2847

You are being invited to take part in a survey conducted as part of the work of the Scottish Government's Expert Advisory Group on Migration and Population. The group was established in October 2018 and produced a first report '[UK Immigration Policy After Leaving the EU: Impacts on Scotland's Economy, Population and Society](#)' in February 2019.

In its second commission from the Scottish Government, the group has been asked to consider ways in which immigration might be used as a tool to offset demographic pressures and population challenges. As well as reviewing policy models and examples from other OECD countries, the group has decided to conduct a small survey of Scottish local authorities to gather insights from existing or previous initiatives and experience at local levels. You are being invited to respond to the survey below in your capacity as xx officer for xx local authority.

Please reply to as many of the questions below as you have relevant information on, and/or feel free to send us related documentation from which we can find the answers. (If you chose to do the latter it would be most helpful if you could indicate page ranges where the relevant information may be found whenever possible).

We expect to publish a report from our findings in October 2019 and we may quote from materials or responses that you send us. Information provided will be attributed to the relevant local authority in the final report, but no individual officers will be identified by name or position.

We will retain your answers and other materials you might send us for use in the future work of the Expert Advisory group as appropriate. We will not share them beyond that group without your permission. By returning the survey you are consenting to take part in this research as outlined above.

This study has been reviewed by the College of Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee University of Glasgow.

Should you have queries or complaints about the study these may be referred to College of Social Sciences Ethics Officer, Dr Muir Houston, email: Muir.Houston@glasgow.ac.uk

### Survey questions

- 1) Could you describe for us the main challenges for your local authority relating to population? (e.g. ageing; retention of young people; labour shortages (in specific sectors)...) )
- 2) Do you have a sense of the profile of people moving out of the area in terms of age/gender/education/skills/destinations (other areas of Scotland/UK/International)?
- 3) Do you have a sense of the profile of people moving into the area in terms of age/gender/education/skills/places or countries of origin (ie. From other areas of Scotland/UK/EU/International)?
- 4) How does migration (either international or from other areas of the UK/Scotland) feature in the LAs current consideration of and responses to population issues?
  - a) What opportunities do you see migration as bringing in relation to population issues?
  - b) What challenges do you see migration as bringing in relation to population issues?
- 5) What measures have been taken to date (whether ongoing or not) to try to attract people to the area?
  - a) How successful have these been?
  - b) If no longer ongoing why did these cease?
- 6) What measures have been taken to date (whether ongoing or not) to try and retain new arrivals in the area?
  - a) How successful have these been?
  - b) If no longer ongoing why did these cease?
- 7) Have other measures been considered but not (yet) implemented?
  - a) Why have they not been implemented (yet)?
- 8) Have any of the measures mentioned above been targeted at attracting people from particular areas in Scotland/Rest of UK/EU/non-EU countries?
- 9) Have models or examples of good practice from elsewhere (within Scotland/UK/other countries) been considered in developing LA responses and measures?



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